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EURO-COMMUNISM

The following discussion took place in New York in 1977 at the Carnegie International Center.

William Phillips: A story told in the thirties might be applicable today. A cop was swinging his club at a woman who kept shouting at him, "Officer, I am an anti-Communist!" "I don't care what kind of Communist you are," the cop answered.

The difficulty in defining Euro-communism, it seems to me, is that while it appears to be a new movement, or a group of new movements, it is actually an old movement claiming to be changing, but only partially. It is not clear how much of the change is genuine, how much is a sham, how much is a shift of tactics, how much a basic transformation. Hence, Euro-communism is a political mystery, and political detectives on the Right and on the Left, all over the world, are busy trying to solve the mystery. No one is sure exactly what its aims or motives or precise nature is. This represents a reversal of the famous statement by Marx and Engels in the *Communist Manifesto*: "The Communists disdain to conceal their views and their aims," though we might note that the concealment of their views and aims has been going on ever since Stalin came to power.

The main question, of course, is whether the Communist parties of Europe are independent of the Soviet Union, as they claim to be, and whether, therefore, they are to be regarded as indigenous national parties, or as arms of the international Communist movement, with its center in Moscow. There are other important questions, too, which I shall try to formulate as neutrally as possible. First, whether the European Communists have given up revolution as a means of taking power, and have also given up the doctrine of the dictatorship of the proletariat, as some of the parties, like the French or English Communist parties, say they have. Two, whether the claim of independence involves democratization of the parties. Or whether both independence and democracy have been decreed from above. We are told that there is a certain amount of disagreement within the European Communist parties, but it is hard to tell from here how much there is, and how open it is. Three, whether the

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fact that on most issues the European Communists parrot the foreign policies of the Soviet Union—particularly on the question of Israel—is a hangover or further evidence that Euro-communism is not independent of Moscow. Four, whether a process of political logic has been set in motion that cannot be reversed—even if the Communist parties are not truly independent or democratic, as they say they are. Whether, that is, the Communist parties of Europe are bound ultimately by the laws of history to become democratic and independent, regardless of the intentions of their bureaucratic leadership. Five, whether, even if the European Communist parties are trying to establish some degree of independence, they should be supported or opposed by liberals and people of the Left, particularly by Democratic Socialists. In other words, whether their nature and their aims are acceptable to people like us, under any circumstances. And sixth, finally, for those concerned with American foreign policy, a further question is: What attitude should America take toward the Communist parties of Europe, and the possibility of their coming to power, either alone or as a part of a Left coalition? The question could be put in another way: Should a progressive American foreign policy regard the Euro-Communists as a force for democracy, or totalitarianism?

There is a further question or irony contained in the very term Euro-communism, for it implies that the Soviet Union is not part of Europe. In this respect, and by a very circuitous route, and surely unconsciously, the term suggests a return to Marx's original idea, that Marxism or socialism had to come first in the advanced countries of Europe, and not in the underdeveloped parts of the world.

I suspect we will not answer these questions tonight, for even an intelligent discussion always raises more questions than it answers. We have cast the discussion in the form of an exchange or debate, because we thought the issues would be presented more sharply that way. We have also asked a few people to act as discussants after the main speakers present their views.

Norman Birnbaum: In the first place, I must confess to a considerable and growing skepticism about the term "Euro-communism." It is a convenient journalistic term that was, in the end, after a certain reluctance, accepted by some of the European Communist leaders; most recently by Mr. Marchais, who has since departed to some degree from the Euro-Communist line on grounds that it was of some propagandistic efficacy.

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The three major parties which have been called Euro-Communist are, of course, the Spanish Party, just emerged from a long period of illegality; the French Party, which for a while was, as you all know, one of the most Stalinist parties of the international Communist grouping, and which was for a time even tempted to back the Chinese against Kruschev on the grounds that the Chinese represented what they said they did, namely doctrinal purity; and the Italian Party, which is the largest Communist party outside the Communist, State Socialist regimes, and also the most differentiated, the most interesting, and in some ways the most perplexing. These parties are embedded in very different political and national histories, despite the fact that all three have in common belonging not only to Western Europe, but to Latin and Catholic Europe, which may account for at least some of their characteristics. So, I think the best thing we can do is cast a brief look at the historical setting, examine the specificity of each party in its recent development, and try to reach conclusions on that basis.

In the first place, it seems to me that the movement called Euro-communism and the recent changes in the European Communist parties, their doctrines, their strategy, and their degree of autonomy from the Soviet Union can be understood only if we look at two other forces in Western Europe with which we are more familiar or more comfortable. The first of them, paradoxically enough, is Euro-capitalism. European capitalist systems recently, at least, have been rather different from our own, since they generally entail a much higher degree of state intervention, or welfarism, and modification of market mechanisms. So that, so to speak, the capitalist opponents, whom all the European Left parties seek to some degree to supersede, have to be reckoned with politically in very different terms. There is also something we could call Euro-socialism. It has been called that by a lot of Europeans, and by a lot of American commentators. And that is a broad belt of parties ranging from the British Labour party, the German Social Democrats, the Swedish Social Democrats, through the French and Spanish Socialists, which are rather large parties, to the Italian Socialists, now in disarray, but who will not be permanently in disarray. These parties, which have kept alive to some degree a tradition of parliamentary socialism, need not be converted to it. And, particularly in France, Italy, and Spain, they are in electoral and cultural competition with the Communist parties for large blocs of voters from the working class and the intelligentsia.

These parties have indeed exercised some influence on the

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European Communist parties. And one could say that the degree of success of Euro-communism, or its change to a specifically Western European communism, might only be measured when, in the end, the Euro-Socialists and the Euro-Communists fuse, restoring such unity as the European working class movement and Socialist parties had before the great break at the end of the Second World War. I think we also have to say that the recent changes in these parties reflect certain long-term changes in the situation of Western European politics. These are new forms of socialism, some of them claiming descent from Marxism, some of them not. It is obvious that we have reached the limits of a certain redistributive or welfarist model of capitalism, limits which were reached probably even before the present economic and resource crisis made itself felt.

There are other factors. It is, or should be, quite clear, even to the most orthodox or dogmatic of Marxists, that the Western European populations—and in these populations we should certainly have to include the Greeks, the Spaniards, and the other Latin populations—are committed to the idea of parliamentary democracy. Some of them may wish to go beyond it, deepen parliamentary institutions, or supplement them. There is a division in these populations over socialism, or different forms of economic redistribution, but the commitment to parliamentary socialism, civil liberty, and the like seems so strong that no party claiming to oppose it could hope to do very well. Secondly, I think it would be generally agreed that as a model, on the sixtieth anniversay of the Soviet revolution, the Soviet Union is not, to say the least, compelling. Indeed, there can hardly be any place in Western Europe in which the Soviet Union's social achievements or political system can be looked to as a model, and indeed the problem for the so-called Euro-Communists or Western Communist parties is how to distance themselves with as much elegance and speed as they can from the Soviet Union. At the same time, there has been a general loosening in international politics, which means that the United States no longer necessarily appears to these countries, even to those on the Left, as an imperialist superpower, but as a struggling and interesting democratic society. There has been, I think, a change in this respect, to the extent that the American model of culture, if not American politics, has a considerable attraction for segments of European society, particularly for the European Left, including some of the Communist parties. That much said, let's move on to the specificity of Euro-communism. It seems to me that there are three

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issues about these parties which William touched upon. First, of course, their degree of autonomy, real or claimed, from dependence on the Soviet leadership. Second, the degree to which they are really prepared to accept, not temporary participation in parliamentary democracy, but actual participation, and electoral alternation. To what extent have these parties really undertaken a revision of their doctrines, such that they are prepared to approach a modern model of democratic socialism? Third, the question of their internal structure. To what extent have they really deviated from democratic centralism, that is, from a rigorous and vertical organization with party changes, changes in line, commands, tactics and so on, coming down from a co-opted group at the top? At any rate, rather than deal with these questions in general terms, let's look at the parties in particular. The Spanish party, which got not quite ten percent of the vote in the last elections, seems to be making an ideological turn because of Carrillo's pronouncements, his assertion that the Soviet Union is not a Socialist state, or is a failed model of socialism, the fact that he was in Moscow the other day and was not allowed to speak, the fact that the Soviet Union attempted to launch a counter-party which failed miserably under the Republican Communist General Lister. Of course Carrillo and his party have a great deal to live down.

And the role of the Party in the Spanish Civil War was at least ambiguous. It mobilized for the war. It was able to point to the Soviet Union as the one foreign power which assisted the Republic. On the other hand, it used its entrenchment in the army, the state apparatus, for the persecution of its opponents, particularly its opponents on the Left, like the Catalonian anarcho-syndicalist movement. And its mode of dealing with them in the wartime situation was tyrannical and totalitarian. That is a legacy of the Spaniards. However, it should also be remembered that since about 1954 his predecessors in the leadership of the Party have sought a peaceful, nonrevolutionary transition from the Franco regime, and since then they have emphasized that.

The French Communist party of course is older. It is more firmly implanted. It sees itself as the heir not only of Leninism, but of a certain tradition in French working-class socialist politics known as *ouvrierism*, or working-class domination. It also entertains Jacobin notions of the state and is therefore a centralizing party. It has little tolerance for some of the newer notions of participatory democracy which have come up on the Catholic Left

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and in the Socialist party. Its formal break with Moscow, and its alignment with the Italian Party, which is regarded as something of a rival in Western Europe, is relatively recent. It is interesting that this formal break in late '75 came some years after the electoral pact with the Socialists and the program of the union of the Left. And this break may very well have been facilitated by the Soviet Union's backing of Giscard in the presidential election against Mitterand.

If we move to Italy, we find an even more open situation and a more perplexing one. Just the other day, the leader of the Italian Republican party, a much respected senior figure of the secular Republicans and a liberal in our terms, Ugo LaMalfa, said that it was now time for the Communists to enter the government. And there is a movement in the Communist party directed against its present leadership, which argues that it must either carry the present compromise with the Christian Democrats to its logical conclusion and enter the government, or cease to support it, form a Left alliance, and offer itself as the center component of an alternate government. The Italian Communist party is the heir, to some extent, of a dessicated socialist tradition. It is also the heir of a Republican tradition, and at the same time it has made strenuous efforts to reach a compromise with Italian Catholicism.

The efforts are rooted in, amongst other things, an accurate view of the Catholics as not necessarily procapitalist or market-oriented. From 1956 onwards, the increasing autonomy of the Italian Communists from Soviet domination has been evident, from the declaration on polycentrism by Togliatti to recent declarations. What is more interesting about the Party, I think, is the fact that tactical questions are more openly carried out and discussed in the Party and before Italian public opinion than in any other Western European Communist party. There is a Left line, and a more or less Right line. The Left line argues for a union of all working-class forces, and confrontation. The Right line, led by Amendola but adopted by Berlinguer, argues in effect for a government of national emergency, a cross-class alliance. It is this line which, in the form of the so-called historical compromise, has, for a time at least, triumphed. The difficulty is that it takes two to play, and the Demo-Christians have rather successfully utilized Communist support to maintain themselves in the precarious position of minority government. We can therefore say that the crisis of Euro-communism in Italy is not a choice between subservience to the Soviet Union and something else. It is a crisis between two versions of the transition to socialism in

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Italy, and between two interpretations of the possibilities of the Party in the present spectrum of Italian political forces. For the moment, the so-called Right line has won, but there are some indications that this might not go on forever.

The United States policy is more supple or subtle at the moment than under Kissinger or under previous administrations. The official policy declaration is that the election of Western European governments is a matter for the Western Europeans, but that we prefer that parties with "our values" should be elected. I myself fail to see why my own values are more reflected by Fanfani the leader of the Italian Right, than they are by Berlinguer. For the moment the United States is playing a waiting game. It has indicated that it won't be thrilled by a union of the Left government in France, or by the entry of the Italian Communists into power. It has also indicated that for the moment no strenuous and immediate measures will be taken against them.

This is somewhat of an improvement on a policy which made us hostages, as in other parts of the world, of the Right. At the same time, it conceivably gives us chances to open up a "dialogue" with important sectors, particularly in southern Europe, of the society who have simply been out of contact with theUnited States, particularly in the Union movement, and large sectors of the intelligentsia. On the other hand the policy keeps open some alternatives. Do the Euro-Communist parties, as varied as they are, and with the French Party in particular in a state of such rupture from the Socialists that it is unlikely now to enter government in the foreseeable future, present a danger to Western European democracy? And if they do present a danger, should we not come to the aid of the forces opposing them? The answer to that question is that different people will make different estimates of the risks. Large sectors of European opinion, not alone in these parties or on the Left, do not necessarily see these parties as presenting a danger to European democracy, and one could make a case for the position that an attempt to block European politics by saying that the European Communists can on no account enter government opens up possibilities not alone of blockage and polarization but, at least for Italy, the possibility of a devastating civil war with unforeseen consequences.

It seems to me that the movement of change in some of these parties can in fact be encouraged, facilitated, or at least treated with a certain amount of long-term comprehension. This would probably entail accepting for the moment cross-class alliances and alterations

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in European social structure of a more profound kind than our political imagination allows us to envisage as possible. So that, for the moment, the only judgment one can reach is that certain judgments have to be suspended.

Walter Laqueur: If I were to talk about the realities of Euro-communism, I wouldn't need fifteen minutes. I would simply say that I am all in favor of it. I am in favor of Communist parties becoming parties of freedom, democracy, social democracy. In other words, that they stop being Communist and become European. Unfortunately, such parties do not exist today. Whether they come into existence at some future date is a different question. In short, to attack Euro-communism is a little bit like kicking a dead horse. Well, the horse may not be dead, but it is in so weak a state that any decent person who had any love of animals would think twice before kicking it.

What happened in France, we all know. Italian Communist leadership has been very, very careful in recent months, mending its fences with the Soviet Union. And as far as the Spanish are concerned, it is true that Carrillo has written an interesting book. But his party is far from being a Democratic Socialist party. And anyway, one Carrillo does not make a summer. Now, instead of talking about the realities of Euro-communism, let me talk about the concept. Here of course there has been a debate, especially in this country, and to a certain extent in Europe, and I want very briefly to go into the arguments.

I would like to say immediately that conclusions have been drawn which are much too far-reaching. One such assumption says that there has been a genuine conversion of Western European communism, and young people have come in, which is perfectly true. But the fact that these parties have become more modern does not necessarily mean that they have become more democratic. They have not become a "party like all others." They are still a very disciplined party, in which the line can be changed from one day to the next, as has just happened. We know from the history of the churches, the further a world movement spreads, the more it splits. However, these splits do not usually amount to a real schism. So far there has been only one schism in the Communist movement, and that is China. All the rest have been kept within the family. It is perfectly true that Western European parties want a loosening of the ties. They want the father to have less authority. But it is still one family. And, if attacked, they will rally.

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The second point that has been made is that the Communist parties of Europe are no longer revolutionary. But this is not a very important point. They have not been revolutionary for a long time. At any rate, this is not the issue at stake. Stalin was not a revolutionary either. It is frequently argued that if the European Communist parties are exposed to the realities of power, of responsibility, they are bound to change. Now, unfortunately, and here I can go only by the record, wherever Communist parties have come to power—and this is not longer in one or two countries, but in a dozen countries—what has emerged is a dictatorship, frequently a brutal dictatorship. A non-Marxist may perhaps argue that this was an accident of history. But I don't think a Marxist can dismiss it like that. I believe that should the Italian Communist party come to power, it would behave more humanely than other parties. Italy has a political culture which is not that aggressive, or violent, although lately they have been trying to catch up a bit. Indeed, Italian fascism was much more humane than nazism. How many people were killed under Mussolini? Maybe twenty over twenty years. It was "fascism with a human face." And I can imagine that in Italy, with communism in power, it would be a relatively moderate dictatorship. Secretary of State Vance has said that Euro-communism would be much more of a menace to the Soviet Union than to the West. This seems to me a little naive because for the Soviet Union, and for Eastern Europe, Euro-communism is no more than a nuisance. There is no danger of ideological infection. Soviet power rests on power, not ideology.

The Eastern Europeans know far more about the reality of communism than even Mr. Carrillo and Berlinguer. The situation as I see it has of course changed; this is not longer 1953, and Stalin is no longer alive. I would not pay that much attention to changes of doctrine, because Communist doctrine has frequently changed, in 1935, for instance, and again in 1945. I would attribute much more importance to the structure of the Communist party, and this has not changed yet; they are, as yet, organized like a military body, meaning that a few people in the leadership decide, and the rest obey. And unless and until this changes, Communist parties cannot really be trusted, because a party which is itself, in its structure, not democratic, will not behave democratically toward other parties. Nor are they really independent vis-à-vis the Soviet Union. In the 1930s, Dimitroff coined the famous phrase according to which the acid test for every Communist is his attitude toward the Soviet Union. It seems to me he was perfectly right then, and he is right now.

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To this day, the Communist parties of Western Europe, with very, very minor exceptions, still argue that what has happened in the Soviet Union are temporary aberrations which will be put right, that the Soviet system, with all its imperfections, is greatly superior to any other social-political system. I don't know if they believe it, but they profess to believe it. Until the unbilical cord has been cut, these parties cannot be regarded as potential or genuine allies for any democratic parties. My criticism in a way is much more in sorrow than in anger. I genuinely hope that there will be something akin to Euro-communism, because I hope that all splits of the Left will be overcome. However, today, I do not yet see it. I see people of good will who have been misled in assuming that such forces already exist. I cannot be sure as far as the future is concerned. I am reasonably certain that it will not happen in the near future. What will happen in the more distant future no one knows.

William Phillips: I think you have a few minutes to comment on what Walter Laqueur has been saying. Go ahead, Norman.

Norman Birnbaum: It seems to me, Walter, that you have raised the issue of the Communists coming to power. That is a serious issue, but if in fact we look at the present situation in France, they appear, for reasons of their ideological preoccupation, or perhaps of their long-term strategy, to have refused the chance to enter government, because they did not get the right terms. And it is difficult to believe that the French Communist party will get much more than twenty percent of the votes. It is difficult to see how a party like this can come to power.

It could have entered government in a coalition with other parties, the Socialists and the so-called Left Radicals. But we know that in parliamentary systems parties that enter government don't necessarily come to power. In Italy, where the Communist party gets over a third of the vote, it is the Communist party itself that has insisted that if it comes into office in the near future, it wishes to do so in coalition with the Demo-Christians, the American-backed party in Italy. And if the Communists come with a coalition in either of these places, it seems clear that they will not get the ministries of defense or of the interior.

I think we also have to place a certain amount of reliance on the Europeans. Walter spoke of sincere people who have been "deluded," or misled. If in fact this is true of a considerable portion of the European electorate, there are others, such as the French Gaullists, who are prepared to give the Communists a chance to play according to the rules of the parliamentary game.

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For the moment, by the way, the Italian Communist party does exercise a considerable veto power on the policies of government, and through its chairmanship of parliamentary committees has something to say about the day-by-day running of public affairs. If we move on to the question of relationships to Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, it seems to me, Walter, that you have exaggerated the degree of dependence of these parties, particularly the Italian, but also increasingly, I think, the French Party, upon the Soviet Union. You call them family quarrels. They bring up strong feelings, but they are not notoriously unifying for those who live through them.

It is true that the Sino-Soviet split was a major split precisely because the Chinese were not simply a guerilla party in the hills, desperately trying to negotiate with the Kuo Min Tang, but because they represented the state apparatus, the government and the national consciousness of a major power. There is no reason to suppose that Western European Communist parties, under present conditions in government, will suddenly lose their national component or national consciousness. The notion of the transmission of disruptive effects to Eastern Europe is an interesting one. A certain amount of skepticism is, I think, legitimate. The installation of Marchais in charge of industry in France, or Berlinguer at Finance or even in the Prime Ministership in Rome will not bring down the Soviet regime or the satellite regimes.

An argument could, however, be made that, since the immediate prospect for Eastern Europe is not a choice between parliamentary democracy immediately and the present regimes, but a certain kind of loosening of arrangements to allow the gradual development of pluralism, the participation in government and in democratic political life of Western European Communist parties in some sort of touch with the Eastern European Communist parties might be to the advantage of those seeking a pluralization of political life in Eastern Europe.

A further question has to do with the troubling notion of the structure of the Party, its maintenance as a party, of these parties as Communist parties. We have to take account of the fact that these parties have histories. Some of their history is, to say the least, inglorious. And again I think that it is unrealistic for a historian to expect these parties to change overnight, to stop being Communist. There are generational questions, questions of the adhesion of older generations of militants to the Party, ideological questions, which I think are gradually being solved.

The question of structure is an interesting one and a troubling

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one. These parties cannot be deemed democratic in their internal structure until they adopt different procedures. But those procedures appear to depend to some considerable degree on the will, on the political convictions, and on the political-organizational capacity of their own members and militants. The last word has not been said on the recent turn in France, and its is quite interesting that the unionists associated with the French Communist party and the *C.g.t.* have been very careful not to associate themselves with the Party's recent outright rupture with the Socialists. And in Italy pressure from the base, open discussion in the Party, open dispute amongst the leaders, with interviews in the press, not only in the Party press, but in the non-Party press as well, seems to be the rule of the day.

So the loosening of the structure seems to have gone a certain way at least in Italy. It seems to me that the call or the demand that somehow we oppose these parties because we don't like them, because they have not evolved fully or because they have not fully dissolved and joined the Second International is not entirely realistic. It is a demand which obviously is not going to be met. And we are therefore faced with a dogmatic opposition to these parties because they are Communist, and because we have decided that they cannot evolve at all.

But this raises the issue of American power and American intervention, and the answer is that the Europeans have themselves seized a great deal of autonomy in this regard, and do not seem to share many of these forebodings.

William Phillips: Can I ask you a question, Norman? If you were a political activist in a European country, would you support the Communist party, critically, as we used to say? Or would you support an existing Socialist party, or would you try to build a Socialist party where it was not very strong? In other words, I am asking you for a more concrete position.

Norman Birnbaum: Well, if there existed large Socialist parties, in Italy, France, and Spain, if I were a Frenchman, a Spaniard, or an Italian, I would belong to the respective Socialist parties. But that does not seem to me a very important question. The question is what these parties themselves are doing, and what official American policy or American opinion should be toward these parties. These parties are in various degrees of, let us say, competitive coexistence with the Communists, but none of these parties has announced that the precondition for democratic socialism in its country is the extirpation of this Party or its blockage.

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William Phillips: One other question. I gather that Walter Laqueur thinks that if a European Communist party entered the government, it would strengthen the position of the Soviet Union. Do I understand you correctly to say that you think it would weaken the position of the Soviet Union vis-à-vis Europe?

Norman Birnbaum: I think there is at least as much of a chance that it would weaken it as strengthen it. The French Communist party's foreign policy is not much different from the Gaullist foreign policy it followed. Italy is militarily weak and of no use to N.A.T.O. at all.

William Phillips: All right. Walter.

Walter Laqueur: I am a little skeptical. I don't think that much can be done in any case. Mistakes can be made. That is true. But nothing much of influence one way or another. You said it would be unrealistic for an historian to expect changes overnight. But after all, this is not overnight. I wrote an article about Togliatti in *Foreign Affairs* in 1957, and I am sorry to say I was more optimistic than I am now. Twenty years is not overnight.

You may be absolutely right that the French Party may again change in three or six months from now, but what kind of change will it be? A change decided upon by two or three people on top. These changes we have seen. Now, however, my main point . . . I do not deny for a moment that there have been quite important changes in European communism. But to the extent that there have been such changes, the main motive has been not liberalism, but nationalism. And it is perfectly true that the French Party, the Romanian Party, and the Spanish Party are after all heirs of long cultural traditions. Why should they be run by some Moscow commissar? These people want autonomy. They want more independence.

William Phillips: They want to have their own commissars.

Walter Laqueur: Absolutely. However, you mentioned the fact that French Communist foreign policy is Gaullist. Well, big deal. What you can get in Europe is a kind of Romanian-style communism, which is, I am sorry to say, in some respects worse than Soviet communism. I generally think that one of the redeeming factors of communism is its internationalism. But this internationalism is now going. And instead we get, both in the West and the East, a kind of new national socialism. I don't think this is much progress.

And this is true by the way, not only with regard to France and Spain, but even little Iceland. As far as I know Iceland is the only country where a Communist party has really converted itself into a left-wing Socialist party. But in the process it has become far right-

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wing and chauvinist. The same is true in Norway, where the Communist party last year declared that it would gladly dissolve itself, if by doing so it could prevent Norway joining Europe. Big deal. And you have it even among the left wing of the Socialist party. In Greece there is our old friend Papandreou, a great revolutionary, eating ten Turks for breakfast. He wants a war with Turkey tomorrow. In a way I regard Euro-nationalism as a much bigger danger now than Euro-communism. And the mixture of the two is the worst.

William Phillips: Do you want a minute?

Norman Birnbaum: Yes. I think that the French case is interesting because there are doctrinal struggles going on in the Party, up and down the Party, in the Central Committee, judged by leaks to *Le Monde*. There is a faction which would like to restore the alliance with the Socialist party, a faction led probably by Laurent. It seems to me that, given the structure of these parties, the only way the change will come is through the occupation of key positions in the Party by important factions which seek an opening. This has happened to some extent in the Italian Party, with the importance of the group around Amendola, and even the Left faction in the Italian Party, the faction led by the present President of the Parliament, Ingrao, is not a Stalinist faction. But it is a party which calls for more working-class democracy, participation of the base, spontaneity, and the like.

It seems that the only way you are going to get a change in these parties is through struggles in their central committees, given their structure. We may regret their structure, but they do have these structures. They do have the loyalty of important sectors of the European electorate, and until in fact the question of the democratization of these parties is settled, in the countries in which they are strong, any kind of advance towards an alternate model of society is blocked. They are not like Britain or the special case of West Germany, where, for all kinds of reasons, there is for all practical purposes no Communist party.

William Phillips: Then you really are both agreeing that the question of structure is the decisive one.

Norman Birnbaum: I am saying that it is one of the questions. But it seems to me that the present structure by no means precludes a transformation, because in response to a long series of historical pressures one can get leaders in these parties who will in fact open them up. We also have to realize that these parties are responsive to

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the union movement, which is particularly important in Italy. The unions were for a time the interlocutor of the government.

There are all kinds of complications which it seems to me make even these parties not work according to the model of the rigid central structure, simply changing doctrine at will. It does not happen that easily.

William Phillips: We are asking a few people to start the discussion. We are structuring the discussion. And I am adding you to the list, Barbara.

Barbara Solomon: How do you meet, Norman, the problem that you now have in Spain, where the Communist party is clearly not the slightest big monolithic, where the leading Communist intellectuals are already, since it is Euro-Communist, out of the Party? In other words, it is still structured in its post-Stalinist phase, and that is not speaking about the Lister Communists, who were Stalinists. The ones who we would consider Euro-Communists are out of the Party, and in the recent elections, all the young Communists went out of the Party, complaining that it was bureaucratic. There were certain incidents there, such as the arrest that took place by the Communist party of people who showed the Republican flag. All this irritated the young leftists. In other words, now that it is called Euro-communism, a disintegrating situation already exists, I mean one that we already know something about. This dilemma is not that secret.

William Phillips: Okay, I have prevailed on both of them not to answer now so that we can let other people talk. Incidentally, I should say that we thought that we might get Carrillo here tonight and subject him to cross-examination. Apparently he is in the country secretly. It was impossible to find out where he is.

Walter Laqueur: It shows you how rigid they still are.

William Phillips: We have a list of people here who have agreed to start the discussion. I don't care in what order you want to speak. And whoever wants to speak first is free to start: Michael Ledeen, Kenneth Maxwell, Jane Kramer, Richard Sennett, Carl Gershmann, Bruce Miller, Richard Howard, Blair Clark, Andrew Arato. Who would like to start? Okay, you have to go to see Carrillo in New Haven?

Bruce Miller: Yes, he will be there on Friday.

William Phillips: This is Bruce Miller, who teaches at Yale.

Bruce Miller: Yes, just for the time being. I am struck by the fact that we have a whole collection of Australians, Americans, and English-

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men to talk about this question of Euro-communism, when in fact what we are talking about is three of the major civilizations of the Western world, the Spanish, the Italian, and the French. We sit in a city which is positively percolating with people who come from those countries, yet none of them is here tonight as far as I can see. It seems to be part of the English-speaking approach to the Latin countries. They are not really to be trusted to know about their own circumstances or anybody else's. Clearly the only opinions about them that matter are those which come from people who speak English. That seems to me to be unfortunate, for at least two reasons that are significant in this discussion tonight: One is that it encourages us, particularly Americans, in our inclinations to regard Europe as a whole. To see Europe as a single entity rather than as a series of cultures, the kind of mistake which is so significant in American disappointment about the European economic community and the failure to produce the kind of European federalism that was supposed to emerge when the United States said that it should. But it is also significant because it means that we do not allot, in this kind of discussion, to each of the countries about which we are speaking, that kind of understanding of its separate significant political culture which is of the greatest importance. I think I have got a real difference of opinion from the two speakers, both of whom seem to feel that democracy in European Communist parties is a significant question. That does not seem to me at all imporant.

Who can expect a Communist party to be democratic? Laqueur is quite right. The really important question is whether, if any of these parties came to power, or within striking distance of power, it would act as a tool of the Soviet Union. Not whether, in the local context it is essentially democratic, either in its own structure or in the way it attempts to run the national government. Democracy is not an entirely frequent occurrence in Mediterranean societies, and I would not be at all surprised if, when a Communist party came to power, in any of the countries we are talking about, it proved to be as dictatorial as Mr. Laqueur has suggested. But that is not the important question, when one is looking at this from this distance. The important question is whether the Soviet Union is going to be a part of this particular Party, or whether it is likely to be as resistant to the Soviet Union as so many of the existing Communist governments that are not under direct Soviet military control have proven to be.

So then the essential questions are: What are the political

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circumstances in each of the European countries in which a Communist party has something more than minimal existence? What kind of a political culture does it operate in, does it refer back to, has it to work with, in order to achieve some kind of influence? And if it does become a highly significant party, if it does become the party with control of the state, will it be under the control of the Soviet Union? I would guess, and here I agree very much with Mr. Laqueur, it would have to be a very unusual Communist party to be under the control of the Soviet Union once it became the party of government, if it could possibly avoid it. The real question is just what the influence within Western Europe of Communist governments which were both dictatorial and nationalistic will be. And which might very well fear the overall influence of the Soviet Union more than they fear the influence of the United States. The United States has had plenty of experience at working with dictatorial nationalist governments. It has on the whole thought them rather a good thing in various parts of the world. It might well turn out that a nationalist Communist government in Western Europe would be just as drawn to the United States as a national government in South Korea, Thailand, Vietnam, Spain, or Portugal.

William Phillips: Well, I can't defend the Australians, but in defense of the Americans, I might say that we asked a number of people of different national origins and many could not come. In addition, I might add that people were not invited on the basis of their national origin. There were other considerations which led us to invite people to come to this meeting. Now, who on this list would like to go next? That is Arato.

Andrew Arato: I am Hungarian. I would like to raise a few questions of my own. First of all, we would have to ask whether it makes any difference that at least two of these parties, and possibly the third, but in any case the Italian Party, is really a mass party of the industrial working class. I mean, I think it may make some difference, certainly in terms of the historical precedents, because the Eastern European parties were not mass parties of the industrial working class.

The Czekoslovakian perhaps has come closest, but even that has taken power in no way through being a mass party of the industrial working class, but through the other well-known way. Now that is my first question, and I would like to ask what the political consequences are, and I think that just to give a hint of an answer, I would like to say that the political consequences are serious, because the Soviet-backed model cannot, in any sense, represent the immedi-

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ate interests of the industrial working class. It never has. In fact, any time that even slightly organized industrial workers get a chance, they rebel against that civilizational model.

The second question is whether the structural conditions of Western European capitalism at the present moment allow anything like the East European civilizational model. Which one could call statism, one could call parochially collectivism, one could call, as some friends of mine now call it, rational redistribution. But whatever one calls it, if one actually analyzes it, one will see that it is no longer terribly useful even in a pragmatic economic sense for the more developed countries of the Eastern European bloc. How could it be very useful for a France or an Italy?

I think that the Italian Communist party's policy on nationalization reflects that. They still believe, I think, in statism. I think that theirs is a statist party. Its form of organization is a pseudo-statist organization, a statist organization in advance, but they also have come to understand that the model by which a party becomes a state, mainly largely on nationalization, is not a terribly relevant one at that stage of development.

One would still want to examine what the possible institutional forms of a mixed economy would be in such a society. That would have to be investigated in detail, and with regards to the possible crisis tendencies of technocratic and semi-bureaucratic forms of rule, which I think are very, very real. And Eastern European countries escape them only because they do have Russian troops there after all. But it is not so easy to escape precisely those tendencies in Italy or France. So a party would have to learn from practice very soon that the Soviet-type solution to mixed economies—because I think they are all going to face mixed economies of one kind or another in the long run—is a rather difficult one, although it is not impossible.

Then, finally, I missed the most important question for me. It is to what extent this type of bureaucratic organization is still the same organizational form that has been developed out of the Russianizing of Marxism. We have to remember that communism is a very specific Russian and Eastern European thing.

If one even looks at a map of Europe, where those social conditions exist, one can also trace out the history of the Romanoff, Hohenzollern, and Hapsburg empires, and you don't have that particular social condition anywhere else, at least in Europe.

William Phillips: Thank you. You raised some interesting questions. I forgot to mention that Andrew Arato teaches sociology at the New

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School. And I forgot to mention that the lady sitting in front of you, Bruce Miller, to the left, is Italian. And I hope at some point that the two Italian friends here will have a chance to talk. Dick Howard. Richard Howard teaches philosophy at Stony Brook.

Richard Howard: What strikes me about the Euro-communism movement is that, first of all, its birth is situated in 1968. That is to say, May 1968 in France, the so-called "Creeping May" in Italy, and Czekoslovakia. It seems to me that what Euro-communism represents in the first instance is a reaction to the innovations that May represented. That in a certain sense May was a rebirth of a sphere of political activity no longer caught within the bounds of either parliamentarian or traditional party forms. And one would have to ask to what degree Euro-communism is a conscious attempt on the part of the Socialist and/or Communist parties to recoup the energies that were born or manifested or that recognized themselves for the first time in May, or to what extent those energies will be able to go beyond those party forms. Norman Birnbaum mentioned the name of Paul Laurent as some sort of oppositional person. Laurent has recently made proud statements about the French P.C. now having gone beyond six hundred thousand members, pushing towards the million mark.

Is it the case that he expects this to be some sort of *débordement*, to be some sort of going beyond the iron discipline of the Party? Could it be that the recent decisions on the part of the French Communist party were an attempt by one faction of the Party to recoup its control over the Party form?

What in fact is going on? Is there some sort of transformation of the logic of capitalism that we need to deal with? It seems that is precisely the case. The political theory of the Euro-Communist movements, most recently articulated in a book by Lucien Sèvre and several others on the theory of the state, seems to adopt a sort of stamo-cap model, state-monopoly-capitalism, a particular image of a state as somehow independent from the economic situation and operating in the name of, or in favor of, capitalism, this particular independence making for the possibility of a democratic force intervening, taking control of that state and somehow using it for the good cause instead of for the evil cause. We have to ask whether that theory makes any sense. I think it makes very little sense. But if it does become the theory of these parties, why is that the case? Here I again go back to Arato's questions about the social formations of the Eastern European countries and their relevance to the West. If those

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parties adopting a theory of state monopoly capitalism are suggesting that they can conquer the state and then use it in a certain manner, how in the last resort does that differ from precisely the Leninist model? That is, was the Leninist revolution, the Bolshevik revolution, a working-class revolution?

Was it not more the case that what took place there was a political revolution? A political revolution *à chaud*, whereas here we have a political revolution *à froid* which they are trying to institute. Arato talks about the mass working-class base of these parties. What one has to ask as well, and here one would have to follow some of the analyses of Habermas in his legitimation problem flow, is what influence have phenomena such as the fact that wages, prices, and so on are no longer distributed according to market mechanisms, the anonymous market, but that we have political wages. What is the influence of the fact that greater and greater sectors of our society are working not simply in distribution, but are working in service industries, which have themselves become commodified and subject to a certain logic of, if you will, rationalization. It seems to me that this would bring into question his point about the possible revolt from the Italian workers because they are in fact a mass party. It might lead to more pessimistic conclusions than he suggests. He seems to suggest that somehow because there is a mass base, there is going to be a revolt against an attempt to introduce this state domination.

William Phillips: Thank you. All right. Richard Sennett, who teaches sociology at New York University, wants to go next.

Richard Sennett: I just wanted to make a comment that followed yours. I am struck that in both of your talks the discourse is entirely political.

Norman Birnbaum: It is a little bit hard to talk about Communist parties and not talk about politics.

Richard Sennett: Well, one should talk about something else other than sheer political organization. I have had the feeling that the Euro-Communist movement is a singularly empty intellectual movement, that the level of sophistication of someone like Berlinguer about tactics is enormous, but when you ask, for instance, what would you say is different about the requisites for production of a socialist society now from twenty-five or thirty years ago, there is a kind of blankness. You don't have someone like Habermas walking in step with Berlinguer. There is no interplay between the two of them. And somebody like Althusser no longer marches with them.

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That can be very striking. It becomes more and more official ideology.

Andrew Arato: Any number of fairly creative intellectuals have joined the Party. They are not important in the Party at all. And one wonders what will happen to them over the next five or ten years. They joined the Party recently. The old guard everywhere in the international Communist movement is bankrupt.

William Phillips: All right. Michael Ledeen, who is the executive editor of the *Washington Review of Strategic and International Studies.* Michael Ledeen.

Michael Ledeen: First, I find myself in the uncomfortable position of defending the intellectual qualities of some of the Italian Communists. I don't think it is really fair to say that the old guard of Italian Communists is intellectually bankrupt. Indeed, to the extent that the semi-intellectual content of Italian communism comes from the old guard and not from the new guard, an Amendola, an Ingrao, a couple of others really must rank as serious intellectuals, no matter what else we might want to say about them. This is a comment to you too about the influx of '68. In Italy, at least, I suspect in France too, in the long run, '68 was a kind of challenge to the Communist parties which they did not like, which they have now really assimilated, and with which they are again confronted today.

The extreme Left in Italy, the rally in Bologna, the fact that the new philosophers flock to Bologna to watch this kind of challenge, the fact the *New Republic* wrote about the Bologna rally joyously, saying that this is again the revival of '68ism in the face of these monolithic Communist parties, I think is symptomatic. And quite correct.

But as to the subject of European Communist parties, I agree with Walter, that this is a relatively simple subject which we have succeeded in our brilliant way in complicating almost beyond recognition.

I simply want to remind everybody about the rudiments of this game. First, all of these Communist parties—the French, Spanish, Italian—are dictatorially organized. Even Habermas, who, God knows, would be sympathetic to anything vaguely resembling a communism with a human face, says, if they don't give up democratic centralism, I will have nothing to do with them. So that is point one. Point two is foreign policy. On all major East-West questions, without exception, every Western European Communist party stands with the Soviet Union. . . .

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Simon Head: That is essentially untrue, and that is a factual untruth. The Communist Italian party supported the existence of N.A.T.O. And the participation of Italy in N.A.T.O.

Michael Ledeen: Indeed, so does the Soviet Union. The point is that what Italy is supporting is the Soviet policy of not disturbing the balance of power. The fact of the matter is that even on minor questions, like Somalia-Ethiopia, as the Soviet Union shifts from Somalia to Ethiopia, magically, almost hypnotically, the French, the Spanish, and the Italian Parties shift right along with them. A couple of days before the official announcement was made, we observed some striking shifts in policy. In fact, on all kinds of apparently trivial arguments. Israelis in Entebbe are violating Uganda's national sovereignty, Cubans in Angola are freedom fighters . . . all of these things one after another. Every Communist party, prior to coming to power, spoke exactly the same way that these Western European Communist parties are speaking today.

No Communist party, once it came to power, behaved in a democratic manner. There is nothing that would please me more than to see Western European Communist parties moving toward a Bad Godesberg of their own. But they are not doing that. And I call to your attention several recent votes, the French votes on the abandonment of the dictatorship of the proletariat, from the 1700's on up. The Spanish Communist party, three weeks ago, had a question raised in the Central Committee: Should we democratize the structure? One hundred and fifty nine for to two against. The Italian Communist party, last winter, had Tervetti, one of the most powerful members of the Central Committee, introduce a resolution for democratization of the party structure. It was voted down. It has never been raised again. Lombardo Radici a few weeks ago suggested that the party might be willing to suggest the abandonment of Marxism-Leninism. This was struck down immediately by Berlinguer and nobody heard anything about it again.

There are people in these parties who do not like the state of affairs. But they are minorities of one and two and three. The Amendola faction in the Italian Communist party is a faction of one. The opposition of America to the entry of Western European Communist parties into the government seems to be essential for the interests of the United States, in that it wishes to live in a more democratic world and to contain the spread of Soviet influence and Soviet power.

If these parties are indeed interested in making a genuine

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conversion to Western values, and a real commitment to N.A.T.O., and not the tactical sort which we have heard to date from the Italian party, this should encourage them, and it will keep pressure on them.

Blair Clark: I would like to get both of the panelists to address the question of what they think the Soviet Union could or would do in a number of circumstances about Euro-Communist parties that were in or part of the power apparatus? Would, for instance, the Party leadership be aided, would it be replaced? What would the money factor be? I would just like to hear some discussion of how the Soviet Union, which has been hovering over a lot of this discussion, naturally, would be expected to act in relation to these Parties that in the past have been so close, if not subservient?

William Phillips: Well, we are throttling these speakers, so do you mind if they answer that question later. The other names I have on my list are Jane Kramer, Carl Gerschmann, and Kenneth Maxwell. Who would like to go first? Carl Gerschmann, who is the executive director of the Social Democrats, USA.

Carl Gerschmann: I think in the views of some who say that these policies do not follow the foreign policy of the Soviet Union there is a bit of disingenuousness, because more often than not, the people who are making the argument that they are for N.A.T.O. or something like that are not people who have a terribly great concern about N.A.T.O. They may be trying to rationalize something else, namely rationalize American retreat on questions of Europe.

Now it is true that when countries go Communist, and there are splits such as the Sino-Soviet split, this can be used to give the United States a degree of flexibility in international affairs. But that should not be seen as a total process, a great gain for the West or for the democratic world. These parties, if they come to power, are not going to be great allies of the United States, but the United States is going to be in a weaker position. What is more likely to happen is that the coming to power of these parties will be one step further in the process of the Finlandization of Europe. In other words, it will be a kind of Finlandization from within. If one reads Carrillo's book, one can see that there is contempt for social democracy. Real contempt. "Do not think that because we are Euro-Communists, we have differences with the Soviet Union. Do not think for one moment that we have become Social Democrats."

Basically you have left wings which employ a double standard when it comes to democracy in the world and dictatorships of the

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Left. They are anti-American in their orientation. To one degree or another they are statist in their economic philosophy, and they believe in full-scale statist measures, but even more important than that, they have a deep strain of what I call a utopian program. They will say that they don't like communism as it exists in the Soviet Union, but they also don't like social democracy, so they want something that is different. Now they haven't clarified and they don't have a platform of what that something is, and they are unable to do so in any clear way. It comes down to various types of utopian formulations which are very frightening in their implications for society.

William Phillips: Wait a minute, let's try to be orderly. Everybody will get a chance. On my list are still Jane Kramer and Kenneth Maxwell. Jane Kramer, do you want to talk?

Jane Kramer: I would like to hear our two Italians talk before I do anything.

William Phillips: All right. I hate to refer to you as the Italians. Would you tell us your name and your . . .

Gastone Orefice: I am Gastone Orefice, journalist and correspondent here for the Italian radio-television. Is the modification which occurred in the Italian, French, and Spanish Communist parties true, or are they only tactics in order to get power in the countries? Are they ready to accept the democratic system later on?

I think it is impossible to answer such a question. As you know, we have in Italy a kind of regional partition, a kind of regional power. The Communists have conquered many regions in Italy. What we know is that in many cases they did not turn out to be the way they said they would be. The cases of corruption have been there. Probity is not the main quality for them.

We know that they don't accept any kind of discussion. We have a very recent case about Maria Antonietta Macciocchi, who by the way is the wife of the new correspondent of *Unità* here in the United States. She is a very qualified, intellectually prepared woman, a writer and scholar. She had to write about the intellectual manifesto which appeared in France. And the Party did not like what she said. That means that she was expelled, and her subscription to the Party was not renewed—just one month ago.

We know that the financial sustenance of the Communist party in Italy comes from Moscow.

William Phillips: Can I interrupt you? You said that it is known that

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the Italian Communist party gets its money from Moscow? Is there direct evidence of that? Is that a commonly known thing?

Gastone Orefice: You will never get direct evidence.

William Phillips: All right, but you said it is known?

Gastone Orefice: No, no. I can tell you that we have in Italy many corporations which work and trade with the Soviet Union.

William Phillips: It is done that way?

Gastone Orefice: Yes. Not only that way. We know that the Communist paper, for instance, gets a lot of material directly. Like paper, for instance. No Communist contests that this is true. Concerning the attitude of the United States, I would like to point out that the present administration's attitude of noninterference is much better than the previous attitude, which was made to appear stronger but not very helpful in the Italian situation.

Somebody pointed out the fact of rival forces to the Italian Communist party. I would say yes, we already have some. The Communist party on one side had to moderate its position in order to get votes, and has exposed itself to the critics from the Left. In '47 it is true that the Communists left the power in Italy. Togliatti decided that, because it was the only way to get more votes in '48. Not because he would have been ready to leave power for other considerations.

It is not true, and Michael Ledeen has already pointed this out, that the Italian Party does not have qualified intellectuals. One of the deepest strengths of the Italian Communist party is not only that they have qualified people, but that a part of the Italian intelligentsia supported the Party for many years.

William Phillips: Thank you. Did you want to add anything? Would you tell us your name, please.

Mauro Lucentini: I am the correspondent here of one of the two or three big Italian newspapers left that are non-Communist. It is called *Il Giornale* of Milan. As an Italian, I would like to address myself to the problem of the relative importance of these two questions. Is the Communist Party independent from the Soviet Union? Is the Communist party a democratic party? Again, as an Italian, I strongly disagree with those who think that the main question is the dependence on the Soviet Union. As an Italian Democrat, I experience every day the fact that the most important point is what these people are going to do with my freedoms.

For another reason I would say that this is the main question to

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an Italian. To a democratic Italian. We have been going through fascism. I myself went through fascism. I was very young at the time, but I have a very clear impression of what it was like. And it was a perfectly independent movement, at least for the first years of its existence.

It was independent from any other big power in the world, and yet it was not very good for us all the same. Actually, paradoxically, one could even say, the fact of being dependent on another country would be an advantage. As we experienced under Germany. The moment that Germany became paramount in Italian politics, fascism began to decline. And we were at the end of the tunnel. The same thing could conceivably even happen with Russia and Italy.

I think that there are other questions that interest us, and these are connected with what is going on in Italy now: a restriction of freedoms that has been gradual, very slow, but has been going on day after day and day after day for several years. Actually, why did this happen?

I have my own theory. I published an article in *Commentary* one year ago, maintaining that there is a new class in Italy that is really a new exploiting political class. It came out of the alliance between the Christian Democrats and the Communists that has existed for a long time. Actually, the left wing, coming democratically, are often much more to the Left, or even more Communist if you wish, than the Communists themselves. They have allied themselves in a progression that has been going on, together with the welfarization and the planification and with the enslavement of the Italian economy to the state power, which has given to this class at the same time both the means of controlling everything and the means of exploiting everything to their own advantage.

So it is really a Mafia that is controlling most of the Italian structure, and this is the really grave situation and has nothing to do with theories of communism. Maybe the fact that communism has been called in is a symptom of the fact that they now need someone, some party that has the international prestige and the etiquette and the history and the rigidity necessary to clamp down once and for all on those who would like to object to this system.

William Phillips: Thank you. Jane Kramer and Maxwell and then . . . I have you listed. We are not ignoring you. All right?

Jane Kramer: I think the best I can do is to share some observations, because I have come back from looking at how the Party operates on a very local level, in a small community where it has power and

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where it has had power for a very long period of time, which I think is one of the significant things to look at. And several things strike me that would be interesting to have other people talk about. One is the fact that for people in a country like Italy, where the idiom is so totally political, the networks of the party control practically every aspect of life.

If you would like credit for a business, for a cooperative farm, for any economic aspect of your life, you need political connections. And in a sense the Communist party in Italy represents a vote as much as a party, and a vote among people who were disenfranchised in a sense, who had no networks, no patrons, no one to represent them. In a sense, and I think that this is one of the most important facts about the Party in Italy and in Spain, the Party is very much synonymous with its membership. In France, the Party is a very specific section of the population. In Italy, the Party represents where you go if you do not belong to the other side.

The young people from the Italian sixties who go back to their villages join a party to get anything accomplished. They join the Communist party if they have been on the Left and they do it *faute de mieux* because there is no other network for them to establish themselves through. And in a sense, the fault of the rest of the Left in Italy was in not concentrating on the realities of Italian life. What seems to be happening in Italy now on a local level is that when issue politics are involved—politics of ecology, politics of the women's movement, politics of the bomb—people leave the Party to get what they want accomplished. The ecologists in France could not work within the Party. The feminists in Italy could not work within the Party.

William Phillips: Have the feminists in Italy broken with the Party? With the Communists?

Jane Kramer: No, but the women in the Party, or a lot of them in the Party, have the feeling that the Party sold them out on the abortion reform bill in Italy. What struck me in the village I worked in was that the old-line Communists had enormous control because their networks were the oldest and the most established.

The younger Communists were much greater in numbers in these situations. Yet, they were floundering. They were out of Party councils to a great degree. I worked with a very early cell, which now meets to play cards once a week because the Party is not interested in its cells any more. On the other hand, the Party in Italy, because it is the only alternative in the country for anyone who wants any kind of

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power or to accomplish anything at this point, attracts probably the best people in the country. And this is the paradox right now.

William Phillips: To some extent you are describing a kind of grass roots bureaucracy.

Jane Kramer: Yes.

William Phillips: Thank you. I don't care who goes first. Simon Head or Kenneth Maxwell.

Kenneth Maxwell: I would point out that many of these things we have been told about are far from hypothetical. We have had an example in Portugal over the last two years. I think it is important to look at what Cunhal, for example, says about Euro-communism. He has been asked on numerous occasions, and he says we don't want Euro-communism in Portugal because we have moved beyond the stage where Euro-communism is a useful tactic.

I think it is important to realize that the Portuguese Communist party is the first party in Western Europe in recent years to formally drop the idea that they were dependent on the proletariat. The other thing is the dichotomy raised in the initial contradiction between whether a party is an indigenous party, or some kind of an agent of Moscow. That seems to me quite false and deceptive and indeed dangerous. I think a party can be both, or it can be neither. The Portuguese Party is both. It is a popularly based party which is authentically representing social groups within its own parliament. It is also clearly a Stalinist party closely attuned to the Soviet Union. The question is not whether it is one or the other. It is a question of whether it responds, and how it responds, in given circumstances, to the social conditions that might move it tactically in one way or the other, or toward the geopolitical objectives of the Soviet Union.

Just two anecdotes to end on—I don't know what they mean—which I heard last week. . . . One came from a former member of the Socialist party; he said, "You know, the most Stalinist party in Europe today is the Portuguese Socialist party; it's centralized organized opposition." And the other thing was said to me by one of the richest men in Portugal, who didn't leave the country. He is in New York now, was in Washington last week talking to people from the Treasury and so on about a loan; there was a small group of bankers there. And he said, "You know, the key thing in Portugal, the most important thing that happened, was that our Communists were Stalinists." He said, "That saved us." So, I'd like to leave you with those two anecdotes.

William Phillips: You're being rewarded for your patience, Simon

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Head. Simon Head is a contributor to the *New Statesman* and to *The New York Review of Books.*

Simon Head: I have just one or two *ad hoc* comments to make. First of all, on the question of the relationship of the main European Communist parties to the Soviet Union, I'd like to stress the extent to which it seems the estrangement of these parties from the Soviet Union is a dynamic process. That is to say, it is an error to speak as though there was a decision of any human kind that to make a gesture such as the renunciation of the dictatorship of the proletariat would constitute some sort of break from the Soviet Union.

It seems to me that if one looks at the way this relationship has evolved since the beginning of the decade, really since the beginning of detente . . . what is happening is the Soviet Union by conduct internally and by the very nature of its failure is constantly generating facts in the world from which the European Communist parties must dissociate themselves in order to retain their credibility. This dissociation may either take the form of agitation on behalf of a certain individual or it may take the form of a general dissociation from the nature of the Soviet reality, the way the Soviet Union is developing.

Therefore, I wouldn't like to predict how in the future this dynamic process will end, though it seems to me extremely unlikely that there could be any reversion to a very antiquated dogmatism. Insofar as the Communist parties do return to such dogmatism or fail to disassociate themselves from it, as in the case of the French, they will fail and stagnate.

The second point I would like to raise is this: It is not, I think, valid to try to estimate the future conduct of these Communist parties simply by trying to estimate their sincerity, because change of any institution is not simply a function of attitudes; it is also a function of the pressures to which those institutions are subject. This isn't simply a question of the European Communist parties. If one takes the history of a very different kind of institution, the Conservative party in Britain, in the course of its adaptation to the extension of the franchise and to the introduction of the welfare state, it could always be asked at any given time whether its acceptance of these measures in 1832 or 1945 was sincere. And a comprehensive answer to this question was not to be had simply by looking at the utterances and the attitudes of the Duke of Wellington or Mr. Churchill in 1945. You also had to try to estimate the strength of the forces pushing them in a broadly democratic direction. Really,

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the future of the European Communist parties depends on what one might call generally the democratic morale of Western Europe, the extent to which public opinion in Western Europe is or is not deeply attached to the ideals of democracy, and the extent to which, if they are so attached, the pressures on the European Communist parties will continue in the future.

I don't think we have addressed that question tonight. But the third and last point I would like to make. . . . It seems to me that Mr. Laqueur's pessimism does not stem simply from looking at the European Communist parties. It also stems from the general sense of pessimism about the overall balance of power in Western Europe. The feeling that somehow the balance of power, in terms of morale, particularly in terms of military power, is shifting towards the Soviet Union, and that therefore, in the long run, the European Communist parties, whatever they are saying now, will go with the times, will revert to Stalinism and the curse of the emerging preponderance of the U.S.S.R.

And those of us who continue to believe in detente in spite of this are cast in the guise of Mr. Chamberlain and the appeasers. This question of the overall balance of power in Europe is not simply of fundamental importance to the point of view of the European Communists. It is also of course of fundamental importance to the future of American foreign policy. Upon the answers we give to these questions depends really the future of detente between the United States and the Soviet Union, the future of American military policy.

William Phillips: Thank you. Well, what do you two want to do? Do you both want to answer? You want to ask a question, Jane?

Jane Kramer: I just want to ask if anyone here seriously believes that aside from the Portuguese Communist party, which clearly did intend to take power, any large Communist leadership in Western Europe at this point has any intention of seeking power in their country.

William Phillips: I suspect that everybody here thinks that the thing the Communist party is most scared of is taking power.

Jane Kramer: So when you talk about what communism means in Western Europe, in terms of authoritarian direction, and in terms of spoils, in terms of centralization of power, we are only talking rhetorically. We are talking about Euro-communism—I don't like the word—about Communist parties in Western Europe. Now we are talking about votes representing particular groups. The question is not power at this point. And I think this is a very serious distinction to make because once that distinction is made, the organization

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internally of the Communist party in France makes very little difference in the scheme of things.

William Phillips: Yes, but it seems to me that the question does not exist unless you assume the possibility of these Communist parties having some share of power. If you assume they will never have any share of governmental power, then it seems to me that this is really an academic distinction. Then there is no point in discussing the question.

Jane Kramer: No, I assume that they will share power. I am simply suggesting that some of the terrors raised tonight are more appropriate for a situation like Portugal than for Italy or France. Or even Spain, where the Communists represent a proportion of the vote that is not involved right now from its own practical point of view in questions of taking power and probably will not be in the foreseeable future.

William Phillips: Wasily, did you want to say something?

Wasily Leontief: Different speakers made certain statements about the general state of the system in Europe. And I think this is very important in appraising the future of communism. Now I happen to believe that it will go statist. Anybody who is slightly against statism does not offer any alternative. Except, possibly, I don't know, "Small is beautiful," which doesn't mean anything.

Statism does not mean that all the elbow room is killed. It means strategy of economic development and location will, I think, be decided in a more organized way. I think even the Russians will have to relax a little. Look at Hungary, it is a better example. This is of course state socialism.

William Phillips: Now, I think if you would bear with the speakers. . . the speakers would like to respond and summarize for a few minutes. Do you want to talk? Who goes first?

Walter Laqueur: I certainly cannot summarize, because it was a very interesting discussion, and there are no answers to many of these questions. Certainly I do not have answers to all of them. And I only want to make a very few points in response to some of the questions of fact. Now, in some cases, they did not seem to me terribly relevant. Including even the issue of whether the Italian Party gets money from Russia. After all, even Lenin got money from the Germans, but that did not necessarily make him a German agent. Nor does it seem to me terribly relevant whether these countries are dependent on the Soviet Union, or would act as Soviet agents. I don't think this is true at all. Because the last thing the Italian or the French Communists want is Soviet bases on Italian or French soil. No, I think it is more

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subtle. It is a fact that the Italian Communists today have a certain amount of latitude, and so have the French, in view of that balance of power which exists in Europe. But for that balance of power, I am afraid they would have, to put it mildly, less. Now, you were analyzing the reasons for my pessimism.

If I am somewhat pessimistic, it has to do not so much with the Soviet Union, but with Europe. You mentioned European democratic morale. I see Europe in a state of weakness. A stronger Europe would have very little to fear. Now, one or two other questions of fact. It was asked, what could the Soviet Union do if a leadership emerged in the Communist party which is not pro-Soviet? Well, we had such an experience. And the record is not clear. For a while in Austria, Euro-Communist leadership was in power, and the Soviet Union succeeded in ousting them.

The same happened once in Sweden. The second time it did not succeed. So here the record is not clear. But, in Italy, and some other countries, again we have a more subtle situation, in a way like in Finland; in the last ten or fifteen years, there have been hardly any conflicts between the Soviet Union and Finland. Not because there were no conflicts, but because the Finnish government knew precisely how far they could go. This is the so-called Kekkonen Line. And in a way, we have that situation now with European communism. They know exactly how far they can go.

Norman Birnbaum: Now, this is when you are talking about the parties, rather than about the states . . .?

Walter Laqueur: I am talking about some parties. Now, lastly, we talked about ideological bankruptcy, and here I would probably agree. But I am afraid this bankruptcy today is universal. We have two camps today in Europe. We have the people who are ideologically bankrupt, and we have the people who are confused. And on balance, probably with some misgivings, I would prefer the people who are confused, because confusion sometimes can be creative. And I do not refer to the new philosophers, who are not creative.

However, if I were Stalin, I would ask, "How many divisions has Habermas?" I am not Stalin, and I know that ideas have consequences. But at present in Europe that consequence is a long one. At present, this year, next year, and in this decade, philosophers are not kings. And we are dealing with the realities of power.

William Phillips: Thank you. Norman?

Norman Birnbaum: Well, first of all, there is no society in which philosophers are kings, and although Habermas does not have very many divisions, he does have fifty or sixty deputies in the left wing of

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the Social Democratic party who came from the Socialist movement and who are interested in a different version of social democracy. But I want to get to that in a minute. To Blair Clark's question, what would the Soviet Union do to influence European Communist parties in government, I have several answers. One is of course that those parties in government in coalitions would be bound to negotiate foreign policy with their coalition partners.

If they were outvoted or there were severe disagreements, they would either have to make the government themselves, if they had the political resources to do so in terms of parliamentary resources, or go out of the government. Secondly, there have been episodes in which, for example, the Soviet government at one point after the invasion of Czekoslovakia and crushing of the Dubcek experiment attempted very severe interventions in the Italian party and simply did not get anyplace.

Other things being equal, the capacity of the Soviet Union to exercise undue influence on Communist parties in Western European governments would be appreciably less than the present capacity of the United States, exercised all the time, to influence governments.

It seems to me that three major challenges of a systematic kind were really raised. One came from the representatives of the New Left present here, that is, Dick Sennett, Andy Arato, Dick Howard. They were saying, if I can summarize, that we cannot expect that social conflict in advanced society will take forms which can be dealt with very easily either by a social democratic model of parliamentary socialism or by the Leninist or modified Leninist conceptions of the Communist parties. And then particularly, the adoption by the French Party—the Italian Party is much more cautious about this—of the so-called state monopoly capitalism theory simply leads them into a dead-end, theoretically and politically. Because this affords neither an analysis of the reality of contemporary capitalism nor any form of democratic popular action which can lead out of it, or which can develop new institutions. This is a systematic criticism of the Communist parties from, let us say, the democratic Left. This is precisely the point at which I think Carl Gershmann brought in the spectre that this was utopian, and he joined therefore to the Communists as enemies of the system substantial fractions of the European Socialists. I suppose, Carl, you meant people who by no means have a pact with the Communists but who are in fact seeking precisely these new forms.

The other challenge we would have to deal with came from

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Wasily Leontief, in which he said that one way or another, the future of Europe lies in more statism, more state control. That the rationality of production and of political administration in Europe may well demand this. I think I will try to extrapolate, Wasily. What you are saying is that all these parties, including the Right parties, the European Social Democrats, Communists, the ultra-Left, are to some extent fighting for the control of the future. Or for the direction of what is inevitably going to be a more planned, a more centralized economy. And the question therefore, in this struggle, is who has not only temporary ideological advantages or backing from one or the other superpower bloc, but who has the ability to appeal to the European electorate in terms of some model of the future which promises to combine a continuation of a reasonable standard of living and some sense of autonomy or participation, continuation of the European democratic tradition.

Now Jane Kramer has raised the problem of votes. People vote for this Party. In fact it is true that the Europeans vote for some party. Most of our voting, according to our national voting statistics, is about fifty percent. And it seems to me that, speaking from this side of the Atlantic, laments for an absence or a lowering of morale in Western Europe are in this sense a little bit *déclassé*. And a little bit premature.

Insofar as the European Communist parties have been blocked or have been kept out of government, they have not been thought eligible to be in coalitions. This blocks these votes, blocks the political participation of important parts of the population, and contributes in that sense to a kind of stasis in the political process. It is not a good idea. Now we began on the question and I better conclude here, of the future of Euro-communism. It seems to me that the real question was asked the other day at a meeting of the National Security Council, and there the view was that the future of Euro-communism has to be seen by our government and our political planners, not alone in terms of adherence to the Soviet Union, hypothetical scenarios in which these movements take power, but in terms of the long-term future of European society. And that seems to me a more sensible way to look at it.

William Phillips: Can I ask you one final question? Walter Laqueur has admitted to being a pessimist. Do you admit to being an optimist? Just say yes or no.

Norman Birnbaum: I refuse.

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STORY

Leslie Epstein

A DECISION FOR THE JUDENRAT

That summer there were more flies than usual in the Suburb of the Balut. They dropped, fingernail-sized, into the tin bowls of soup. They banged like hailstones against the sides of the excrement wagons. How awful it was when they whirled over the Ghetto in clouds, touching down now and then like tornados, making a roaring sound. "And there came a grievous swarm of flies," said Rabbi Wolf-Kitzes, quoting his text by heart. He thought the Jews were suffering the seven plagues. But the other rabbis answered him calmly. "The war is going to end in a few months," said Trunk, of the Devout Butchers. "In November." This is how such true-believers reckoned: the new Hebrew year, which fell in November, would be 5702; and was not 5702 the numerical value of the Hebrew phrase, *the Sabbath brings with it peace*? Meanwhile, in 1941, the flies hung in the air, like spots in front of a sick man's eyes, like ashes, like dust.

Because of these buzzing insects the windows of the Chancellory, Dworska Number 20, had to be shut, in spite of the heat of the day. Inside, the Judenrat members also were certain the war would soon end. Not on account of the New Year, but because Russia was at last in the war. It was to celebrate that event that the Council, before the start of its regular meeting, was having a party of sorts. Of course Schotter, the humorist, had been invited. There was creamed herring and, in wine glasses, real purple wine. Popower, once a waiter, was speaking:

"Listen! Horowitz has gone crazy! He thinks he's Napoleon now! That's why he invaded Russia on June 22nd. The same date as the *Grand Armée*!"

Margolies, another ex-waiter, Minister of Justice now: "But Kiev has not fallen! No, they won't take Kiev!"

Schotter, thin, with few teeth: "They say that at the start of the Russian campaign Napoleon wore a red shirt, to hide his blood in case of a wound. Horowitz just put on a pair of brown drawers!"

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There was a peal of laughter. Schpitalnik, the piano-player, inhaled some snuff into his nose. "It make me feel happy," he said.

Next to speak was the Minister of Water and Power, the percussionist, Paradyz: "I have also thought of a joke. What is the difference between Horowitz and the sun? The sun goes down in the west and Horowitz goes down in the east!"

"Ha! Ha! In the east! In Russia, you mean! It's clever!" The person laughing had just that moment come through the door. It was F. X. Wohltat. He had on a white linen suit with wet stains under both arms. As soon as the Jewish Government saw him, they jumped up from their places. Off went their hats. Even Schpitalnik stood up, dizzily swaying.

"Sit down, ladies. Gentlemen, please, replace your hats. All men are the same to me." After he said that, Wohltat did something unique, something new: he held his right arm outward, toward the shocked Jews, as if he wanted to shake their hands. "Friends! Let us greet each other as colleagues. As equals. If you won't put your hats on, look, I'll remove my own." In one hand he gripped his derby, with the other he squeezed the fingers of Gutfreind, Minister of Education.

"This is because of the resistance of Kiev! There are positive reports from the eastern front! That's why you're shaking hands!" said Margolies.

"No wonder he wants to be our friend. The shoe is on the other foot now!"

"Yes!" cried two or three others. "The other foot!"

Then Nomberg, still the Minister of Religious Affairs, held up his palms. "Jews of the Judenrat! What kind of talk is this? We should welcome the head of the Civilian Authority as an honored guest."

"Please, that's all right," the Volksdeutscher said. His damp skin shone in the windowlight. He stared at the Council, member by member: waiters and musicians and actors and cooks. Yet, in their black jackets, their stiffened shirtfronts, they were dressed better than he. They laughed, they swaggered, they would not shake his hand. How could this be?

Schotter rocked forward on his turned-up shoes. "I just heard the following news. Horowitz has requisitioned every chair in the Ghetto."

"I know why!" said Margolies, waving his arm like a schoolchild. "Because he's tired of standing outside of Kiev!"

At last Wohltat turned to Dorka Kleinweiss, the Minister of Provisions and Supply. "I will tell you why I have interrupted your meeting. I need one hundred Jews. It's for a farming project. Light

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work. In the open air. There will be meat to eat, and vegetables and dairy products. All the Jewish Council must do is draw up a list of names. Old people, Madame Minister. Or young people. Or healthy or sick. It is completely up to you to decide. Each Jew is allowed to make up a bundle of twenty kilos. They must be at the Radogodsh Station tomorrow at noon."

The former 'cellist changed color. It was as if someone had drawn a green shade over her face. "They want a hundred Jews!" she screamed.

"Only a hundred. You choose which ones."

The Security Minister, Fried Rievesaltes, who up to then had been silent, now uttered a single word: "Deportations!" He dropped with a thud into his chair.

"Deportations, deportations," murmured the Council, also sitting down.

"Ga-a-a-a!" It was old Philosoff, older even than Trumpleman. Ninety. Perhaps ninety-five. His face had gone red. "Ga-a-a-!" he said again.

"A punishment from the Almighty!" a Minister cried. "He sees us sipping wine and eating creamed fish!"

"Oh! Oh!"

They all were sighing and groaning. Philosoff, the Minister of Charities and Welfare, continued to make a rattling sound in his throat. Wohltat wiped his cheeks and his brow.

"Ministers! Council members! Listen to what I am saying. I am saying more than is allowed. You are right. It is because of the troubles on the eastern front. Because of Kiev. But if reinforcements are called up from the homeland, who will plow the fields and milk the goats on the farms? The answer is, the lucky one-hundred Jews! They just have to pluck fresh eggs out of the nests. It will be like a vacation. In any case, you have my word that the Judenrat will be exempted. My dear friends, you don't have to worry at all!"

Here old Philosoff came to his senses. The tears dried in his eyes. "A soft bone," he said, apologizing. "From the herring."

Then Dorka Kleinweiss, the only Minister still standing, said the following words: "What if we refuse to do it?"

"What? What did she say?" She had spoken so softly that no one had heard her.

"What if we say to the Blond Ones, *No, we won't do it. You do it.* What then?"

There was a gasp from the Judenrat.

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"Then," said Wohltat, "we'll do it."

Mordechai Kleen pounded his fist on the Council table. "The Minister of Provisions and Supply, Miss Kleinweiss, has the right idea. It's a scandal for Jews to put down the names of Jews!"

"Hear! Hear!" cried Margolies, whose eyes were set only milimeters apart, on either side of his nose. "How do we know they're going to a farm? Maybe they'll have to dig dikes, or ditches. We are in office to protect our people, not to send them away."

It was amazing how brave the Jews became. One minute it was as if someone had hit them on the head with an ax; the next thing they were shaking their fists in the air. Baggelman, with his rounded, conductor's shoulders, arose. "To send citizens out of their own country in time of war is a violation of international law!"

The Volksdeutscher looked genuinely perplexed. "But we are the winners," he said. "We make the law."

"I have written your words down on paper. Exactly as you have said them. I shall thus record each of your statements. Now continue. You were saying you wrote the law." It was the Hungarian, Urinstein. He did have a green fountain pen.

Wohltat swung around. "Who is this person?"

Urinstein tipped his black silk hat: "Ministry of Vital Statistics."

Baggelman had more to say. "In the last Great War no one was deported. The invaders behaved with honor toward the Jews."

There was a drop of sweat on Wohltat's nose. Another formed on his chin. "The Great War was a long time ago."

Gutfreind, of Education: "Wait a minute! He said sick people. What good are sick people on a farm? Or old people either? What kind of farm is that?"

"No list! No list!" cried the Judenrat members. It was a moment of courage and heroism. "Why should we give you a list when you can't enter Kiev?"

The Volksdeutscher replaced his hat. "Because it's either you or the Death's Head troops, that's why! Do you want them to make up the quota? Do you know what that will be like? They grab the first person they see. No matter who. The more important, the better. It could even be a Judenrat official—or a member's wife, or a member's child. They do the job with rifles and fists. And no one's counting, either! Take everyone you can! By the neck! By the throat! Get a good grip on their hair! Take two hundred, or three hundred! Watch them squirm!" Wohltat was like a different person. He was panting. His eyes were rapidly blinking. A button had come loose at his collar.

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Paradyz, the percussionist, said, "Maybe we could ask for volunteers."

"In my opinion," said Nomberg, "we have acted hastily, spontaneously, without enough thought."

Verble, the Housing Minister, twisted his waxed moustache. "What about the Jews in the Tsarnecka Street jail. The Judenrat has to feed these anti-social elements, the same as productive workers. That is something I never could understand."

Urinstein—in his top hat and silk tie, his beard and his glasses, he looked like a statesman, not a commercial traveler—Urinstein stood up from his chair and leaned with his hands on the table. "It seems we are not able to come to a decision," he told the head of the Civilian Authority. "We shall need time to continue our debate."

Wohltat replied, "I am willing to turn my back for three minutes. You have three minutes to make up your minds."

Schpitalnik's neck was so relaxed from the snuff he had taken that his head kept nodding loosely, as if to a tune. "Three minutes is a short time. What about four minutes? Or even fifteen or twenty? Everybody wants to give his opinion."

Schotter: "Not I! I have no opinion! I am not a Judenrat member! Here's a joke! Once there was a Jew who got on a train at Crakow—"

"Ten minutes then! After ten minutes Grundtripp will be informed that the Jewish Council requires his assistance."

"You see?" said the pianist. "He's a reasonable man."

Wohltat turned on his heel and went to the window. He clasped his chubby hands behind his back. The flies, he noticed, were bumbling against the glass. He looked into the dusty, deserted streets. He imagined himself pulling a person through them. A Jewess perhaps. By the hair. He dwelled on this, on the little pulls and jerks he would give her, and his throat swelled, like an amphibian's, under his shirt. Meanwhile, behind his back, like more flies, the Jews were buzz-buzzing. Then that sound came to a stop.

"Ahem-ahem—" some person coughed. Wohltat swung around.

A Jew was standing there, swinging a timepiece from his outstretched hand. This was Popower, Ministry of Finance, an erstwhile waiter. He held his top hat against his chest, so that his skull, with its bony, fuzzy ridge, was apparent. "Ha, ha," he laughed to break the silence. "Everybody wants to live."

The timepiece, just like that, went into the Volksdeutscher's pocket.

Mathilda Megalif freely stepped forward. She had the face of an

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artist, with dark semi-circles under her eyes, and lids that came half way down. There were many tight curls in her hair. "The Judenrat requests that the twenty kilo limit be doubled. Forty kilos is all that a strong man can carry. Let a Jew take whatever he is able to lift!"

Wohltat pondered. "The limit is raised to thirty-five kilos," he announced.

It was an important concession. Some of those assembled broke into applause. Verble, of Housing, was especially excited. "People say the Judenrat is a worthless institution. That it should be abolished. But look what we've done!"

Now Paradyz stepped from the group. He was holding a number of rings in his palm. "Noon tomorrow is too soon. People need time. Twenty-four hours more! Just twenty-four! To wind up one's affairs. To say farewell."

"The time limit is extended from noon to 4 PM!"

The Council let out a collective sigh. The Minister of Water and Power slipped the gold bands into the Volksdeutscher's hand.

"This is real diplomacy!" exclaimed Gutfreind, like so many cooks a baby-faced man.

Now the Ministers urged Urinstein forward, so that he faced the head of the Civilian Authority alone. His red lips showed through his distinguished beard. "Let us speak frankly," he said. "I have been authorized by the Judenrat to offer you a certain sum—not jewelry, not watches, but so many thousands of zlotys, in exchange for a reduction in the number of listed Jews. It has already been mentioned: what good are old people and criminals upon a farm? We shall raise a special tax, and with the proceeds you can buy tractors and fertilizers, which will take the place of the Jews."

"One tractor," said Wohltat, "costs forty thousand zlotys."

"Agreed!"

"The Jewish quota is reduced to eighty-five!"

Urinstein was far from finished. "Then we shall raise eighty thousand zlotys. Am I correct when I say that makes a total of not more than seventy Jews?"

The membership became agitated. "Shhhh! For God's sake!" some of them said.

Nomberg whispered, "Urinstein, Urinstein. We've done enough. We've saved fifteen lives!"

But to the amazement of everyone Wohltat crooked a finger in his damp collar and said, "All right. Very well. It's a hard bargain. Seventy Jews."

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The relentless Urinstein pushed on. "By that token, a further forty thousand zlotys would bring the total to—" But before he could finish his colleagues ran to him and grabbed his arms. The bald Popower stepped on his toes. They feared he would undo the good that had been accomplished.

"To fifty-five Jews." The coffee merchant completed Urinstein's phrase. "If the sum you mention, the full one-hundred and twenty thousand, is brought in cash, I shall make the final total exactly fifty. I cannot reduce that number by a single Jew. Do you accept, or don't you?"

Margolies, among those there the most Jewish-looking, was the first to respond. "We definitely accept!" he cried. "The number has been cut in half!"

"We've saved them!"

"Yes! And at what a risk to ourselves!"

"I told you," said Rabbi Nomberg, "that this was our friend. He is practically a Jew himself."

Minister Verble: "We thank our good friend, Wohltat! Hooray!"

"Hooray! Hooray!"

They all turned toward the Volksdeutcher. He remained where he had been, the sweat rolling off him, like rain from an awning. "But where," he asked, "is the list?"

"The list?"

"The fifty names. Write them down. You—" he pointed to the Minister of Vital Statistics. "You with the pen. Draw up the names."

"I am a stranger here," Urinstein hastily said. "A Hungarian citizen. I hardly know a soul in the Ghetto. In my opinion, to choose a name, one name and not another, that is an ethical question. It has a spiritual dimension. Perhaps the Minister of Religious Affairs—?"

"But I represent only a single congregation," Nomberg responded. "And the Italianate Synagogue has been burnt down. I would need the advice of the wisest rabbis. The Pshiskher descendant and other scholars."

"Enough! No more talking! I know this is an attempt to stall for time! I have been here already an hour! Do you know I have the right to shoot anybody I wish? That is the strain that I live with. It's anguish!" The pudgy man was beside himself. His eyelids fluttered wildly. He blew air from his cheeks. "Watch out, Jews! Watch out! I'm changing!"

It was at that dangerous moment that old Philosoff chose to come forward. He walked right up to Wohltat, who had a bubble in the

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corner of his mouth. "I made a list. Since it had to be done." In truth he did have a list, a long sheet of paper, with names on it, written in ink from Urinstein's pen. Nobody made a comment. Nor did anyone attempt to hold him back. Freely, he handed the document to the Volksdeutscher. The latter read the first name out loud.

"One Ferdinand Philosoff."

"Present," answered the waiter. His beard hung down in long separate strands, as if he were having a meal of noodles.

"Ferdinand Philosoff," Wohltat repeated.

"Also present."

And then, before anyone had grasped what had happened, the head of the Civilian Authority began to giggle, then to guffaw. He pointed at the list of names. "*Philosoff*!" he roared. "It says *Philosoff*!"

It turned out that the waiter, after starting with his own name, had set it down again, forty-nine times. "What's so funny?" he asked—not only of Wohltat, but of his colleagues, who were tittering, too. "Who else could I write down?"

Wohltat was taking little steps, wiping the tears from his eyes. "Ha! Ha! My good spirits have returned. I will do everything that you ask. You—" he pointed at Schotter: "Fetch the rabbis. All the ethical scholars. Ha! Ha! Ha! He put his own name down! He wants to be a farmer! Ha! Ha! Sit down, Jews! Talk it over! Seek advice! You now have until sundown, exactly sundown, to write the names."

The Jews did sit down—less Schotter, who, a step ahead of the Other, darted through the Judenrat door.

Two flies had come in when the two men went out. They hopped from one dish of herring to another. They walked skillfully around the rims of the glasses of wine. One flew up and performed the letter Z several times before Popower's nose. The other clung to Fried Rieve-saltes' cuff. Neither man noticed. The whole membership sat silently, like nappers, with their chins on their chests. At last Mordechai Kleen, who had turned recently forty, spoke a sentence or two aloud.

"At first I thought I would play the flute. With that instrument the breath passes over and not into the mouthpiece, so the sound it makes is that of breathing, of life. Nevertheless I took up the oboe."

Baggelman, the orchestra conductor, spoke after another short pause. "In 1885, when I was a boy aged eleven, my family moved from our village to the great city of Vienna. Here there was much to see: the fountains, the gardens, the men and women at tables, sipping red and green drinks. Once on the street I saw a man wearing a turban. That

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same year I went for the first time to the Vienna Opera. What did I see there? A stone statue singing! A pink cloud above him when he sank to Hell!"

A third pause. Then Margolies: "My first post as an apprentice waiter took place at the three-star Scotch Hotel, in Bialystok. This was March, 1900. I was just seventeen. One day, not long after this job began, there was a stir in the grand dining room. All of the waiters and headwaiters were gathered around an oval table. I will tell you who was sitting there. With a cigarette in a holder and a dark blue gown, Sarah Bernhardt. Then on a world tour. Imagine my feelings when I, remember a mere apprentice, then leaning against a distant wall, realized that the famous actress was making a signal to me! *Un Cafe Crême*! she demanded.

"In those days my hair was black and curly, and I wore the curls mostly on one side. Also I had a moustache. That is how I looked when I came up with a cup and a saucer and a pot of hot coffee and a pot of hot milk. I combined these elements without a flaw. Sarah Bernhardt, dear friends! With earrings! With eyebrows! What a terrible blow when I read in the newspaper that they had to cut off her leg."

Verble: "I suggest we look at things this way. Not who should go but who should stay. The biologically sound material. The socially valuable elements. From this perspective, it's obvious we should put down the names of the fifty oldest people in the Suburb. They've lived their lives. We haven't!"

The assembly of Ministers groaned, as if they had been awakened. Fried Rievesaltes slapped at the fly on his wrist.

"Dry leaves," said Nomberg, "must fall."

Dorka Kleinweiss: "I disagree completely. I have not changed my mind. How can you bring yourselves to do the Masters' work for them? How do you *know* it's not because you've been promised an exemption? What if one of us writes down a name because of some private quarrel, to settle some personal debt. We are not, fellow members, the Lords of life and death."

Paradyz: "Come, come, Minister Kleinweiss. What an exaggeration. It is not a question of life and death. We are simply deciding who is to continue to live in the Suburb, and who shall live on a farm. It's not as if we were condemning people to prison."

Baggelman: "I have a question for the Minister of Provisions and Supply. Suppose you were driving a van down a narrow mountain road. The mountain is on one side and on the other is a cliff measuring hundreds of meters. Unexpectedly you see before you a child on the

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right-of-way. No time to stop, Miss Kleinweiss. My question is, what do you do?"

Without hesitating, Dorka Kleinweiss responded, "Swerve over the side."

Baggelman: "Aha! I thought you would say that! Now, what if the van were to be loaded with people? Then what do you say?"

Minister Mordechai Kleen: "It's a completely hypothetical question."

Paradyz: "Not hypothetical. The driver is the Judenrat. The loaded van is the Ghetto. The child is the few who must go."

Gutfreind: "But we can still put on the brakes. By saying, *no*."

"I have a plan that will meet every objection." It was Verble, of Housing, once again. "Miss Kleinweiss said that the Judenrat might act from self-interest. To pay off old scores, and so forth. Very well, then. Why don't we pick the names completely by chance? Then fate will be the guilty party."

Paradyz: "It's a wonderful idea. We could put the names into a hat!"

Schpitalnik: "Yes, yes. We could even put our own names in. Out of a population of over a hundred thousand, the chance of one of us being picked is practically nil."

Many voices spoke together: "Yes. Do it by lot! What could be fairer!"

But the membership of the Jewish Council had yet to hear from the Minister of Vital Statistics. The Hungarian removed his spectacles, which had little black ribbons attached to the lenses, and rubbed his eyes. He licked the whiskers nearest his mouth. "No," he said, "it will not do. If we are going to leave the decision to blind chance, we might as well allow the Death's Headers to do it. They'll seize whomever destiny puts in their way. I have been thinking and thinking. Why does the Conqueror wish us to become his accomplices in this matter? Why doesn't he simply take the farmers himself? It can only be because he is going to commit a crime so big that even he dares not do it alone. What could such a crime be? I have not thought so far. I only know if I were one of the Others the thing I would want most is for the Jews to do it for me. And the thing I would want least is for the Jews to resist. Judenrat members, here's my advice. Let's set a fire, a big one, and order everyone to break through the walls, to swim over the river. *Run*! That is what we should tell our people. *Run*! *Run*! *Run*!"

"Be quiet, sir!"

"What is he saying?"

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"He's non-Polish born!"

"What about women? What happens to them during this fire? What about the children who don't know how to swim?"

"The official policy of the Judenrat is *Cooperation and Production*. Urinstein is taking an illegal line!"

The Minister of Security waved his hand for silence, which he received. "Nobody here heard a word on the subject of swimming in rivers. No one said a thing about fires. Am I not right, Minister Urinstein? It is your duty to report it if you come across such a punishable offense."

Urinstein, instead of responding, hung his head.

Mordechai Kleen, one of the cigar smokers, now ground out his stub. "What," he demanded, "are we going to do?"

Margolies: "Listen! We only have to hold out a little longer! Kiev is a fortress! America will enter the war!"

Philosoff was standing at the side of the table. The mop-strings of his beard shook and shook. "I can't stand it! It's too much of a strain! Why didn't I choke on the bone?" And he started to beat his own head through his hat. Everyone wanted to stop him, and yet everyone, whether in or out of his chair, suddenly froze.

For this reason: the door had opened and standing inside it was the Zaddik of Pshiskhe's descendant, accompanied by Rabbis Wolf-Kitzes, Kornischoner, and Lunt. It was not their sudden arrival that astounded the Council of Elders; they had been, after all, expected. It was what they looked like. One sleeve of Lunt's sportcoat was missing and both his eyes were swollen shut. Kanal, the descendant, had only half of a beard, not to mention the cut on the bridge of his nose. Something had happened to Kornischoner's neck that caused him to keep his chin down, the way a violin player holds his violin. As for poor little Wolf-Kitzes, he had no coat, he had no trousers, and someone had taken his shoes.

"They beat me," said Kornischoner.

The Pshiskher Descendant said, "They pulled my beard."

Popower, the Minister of Finance, thumped the table. "It's an outrage! What intolerable behaviour! They have gone too far at last!"

Baggelman: "Members of the Judenrat, I give you my resignation. I am no longer the Minister of Industry and Labor."

Schpitalnik: "Then I resign, too."

"That's it! It's the solution!" Paradyz shouted. "We'll resign from the Council!"

All members, together: "Yes, yes! Why didn't we think of it before?" They put on their hats and headed for the door.

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But the four rabbis were still standing there. "Where am I?" said Lunt. "It smells like herring."

Verble told him. "It used to be the Chancellory. But not any more. Ha, ha! We've resigned!"

Rabbi Wolf-Kitzes refused to get out of the way. "You cannot resign. You can't leave, either."

"Why not?" Nomberg, his colleague, wanted to know.

"Look out the window."

The Ministers ran to the shut windowpanes. They leaned over each other to get a look out the glass. Then they recoiled, they staggered backward, wringing their hands. There was not a single Jew on the street below. No wonder: a Totenkopfer battalion stood at intervals of two meters the whole length of Dworska, on both sides of the street. Between those two lines, in command of everything, was the Mighty One, Grundtripp himself.

Surrounded.

Gutfreind, still by the window, cried out in alarm, "Look! It's falling!"

The Ministers knew immediately what those words portended. The sun, which had been at the peak of its orbit, was now like an egg yolk slipping down the glossy side of the sky.

Urinstein looked at his wristwatch. "Not much time!" he groaned.

"Not much time for what?" asked Rabbi Lunt. "What's going on? Everything is completely dark."

The one-eared Nomberg stepped forward. "Fellow rabbis, we need your guidance. You must make a decision for the Judenrat."

The descendant of Yaakov-Yitzhak, the Pshiskher, stroked from habit the missing half of his beard. "On what subject do you wish a ruling?"

"The Others have given us until sundown to give them a list," Nomberg explained. "On this list there must be fifty Jewish names. These citizens will be transported to the fatherland of the Race of Masters."

"Reduced from one hundred!" cried Verble. "Don't leave that out!"

"Oh!" There was a tiny, high-pitched shriek and Lunt, originally from Yambol, fell flat on the floor.

"He's fainted!"

The members rushed over and began to slap at the Rabbi's bruised face. "Wake up! Wake up!" shouted the Minister of Water and Power. "It's not what you think! They are only going to work on a farm!"

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Lunt nonetheless could not be roused. The Ministers cleared room for him among the plates and glasses on the table. They laid him carefully down. Then Nomberg turned to the three remaining sages.

"What is your conclusion? Give us your advice."

"Advice? Nothing could be more simple." Wolf-Kitzes was keeping his hands crossed in front of his grey underdrawers. "It is written, *The Law is the Law.* Draw up the list of names."

The oboist, Kleen: "And does the Prince of the Pious agree?"

Everyone turned to the Pshiskher, whose opinion was worth more than that of any single Jew. "If the whole may be saved by the loss of the part, then the lesser evil must be done."

"My position exactly," Nomberg replied. "After all, if the few refused to go, wouldn't they be guilty of an injury to the many?"

Rabbi Wolf-Kitzes: "The fifty are the lucky ones! Chosen to sanctify God's Holy Name!"

Verble's moustache, a long one, was distinguished by the hairs at the ends, which had been waxed to a fine line. "At last! All authorities are in agreement. Urinstein, we'll just use your fountain pen—"

"Not quite all authorities. Not every one." The Rabbi of the Fur Trimmers, even with his wrenched neck, started to speak. "My fellow-scholars have overlooked the words of the mighty Ramban. *If heathens say to the Israelites, 'Surrender one of your number to us, that we may put him to death, otherwise we will put all of you to death,' they should all suffer death rather than surrender a single Israelite to them.* Thus wrote Maimonides."

There was a murmer in the crowd. "There were not," remarked Paradyz, "gattling guns then."

Then an idea came to the Descendant. "One moment, please. There are certain exceptions to the rulings that the Rabbi of the Fur Trimmers has quoted. If the demand of the heathens is not for just anyone, but for a named individual, Jew X, Y, or Z, then in order to avoid greater bloodshed he should be given up. Examples of such cases abound. Was not Joheoiakim surrendered to Nebuchadnezzar, in order to save the Temple? When King David's forces declared they would destroy the city of Abel unless Sheba, the traitor, was given to them, was not the head of Sheba forthwith thrown over the wall? Give them, I say, their fifty heads, rather than let the whole city suffer."

Suddenly the Chancellory was in an uproar. Everyone talked at once. Gutfreind's voice boomed the loudest: "But these victims were named by the heathens. In our case, we, *we alone,* must pick and choose."

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The Minister of Housing: "But we could ask the Others to give us hints. They could name the ones they wanted, and we would just write them down."

"Aha! Aha! I've thought of something!" It was the Fur Trimmers Rabbi again. "It is true, the case of the person specifically named is an exception to the rule, *Not a single soul from Israel.* But there is an exception to the exception. Resh Laquish has ruled, and Ramban has accepted this teaching: not even such a named person may be surrendered, *unless he is deserving of death*!"

Popower: "Wonderful! Grand! It's the criminals! I said that all along!"

"The question is," said Rabbi Kanal, the Descendant, "is the exception to the exception truly an exception? What is meant, beyond the obvious instance of capital cases, by *deserving of death*? Do we not say that a student of Torah is 'deserving of death' if he happens to have a stain on his garment? Is not the man who holds his own organ when passing water called 'death-deserving' too? To whom, then, does this phrase not apply?"

Wolf-Kitzes: "A married man may support his organ from below."

Rabbi Kornischoner said thoughtfully, "What our Master now teaches is valid. All men are guilty. There is no person who can say that his death is not just."

"True! True! Us most of all! We are bad, guilty people! Let's put our names down and be the first ones to go!" Old Philosoff was rocking from one foot to the other. The rosy light in the room lit his swaying beard, like the strands of a beaded curtain.

Then Mathilda Megalif began weeping, from both her eyes.

The next to join in was Schpitalnik, and after him Margolies. "Why are we weeping?" Verble asked, sobbing too. In no time, the whole room, including the rabbis, was quietly shedding tears. The answer to Verble's question was that each man and each woman was thinking of the reasons why he or she deserved to die. Their faces were red, partly from this intense emotion, and partly because the sun—round, immense, purple, like a gigantic beet-root—was setting opposite the House of Lords. They all turned toward it, with bright pink tears on their cheeks.

Then Kornischoner sighed and wiped his wet beard with his sleeve. "Let's keep trying," he said. "We might find a way."

"There is the case of the one-hundred blessed loaves," said Wolf-Kitzes. They all turned toward the half-dressed rabbi. "The heathen demands one such loaf on pain of defiling the remaining ninety-nine. Many authorities write that all the loaves must suffer defilement; but Rabbi Joshua ben Hananish has ruled that while the single loaf may

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not be delivered directly into the heathen's hand, it may be put on a stone within his reach. Thus, by analogy—"

"I know!" Kleen interrupted. "We can write the list and leave it on the table!"

"A perfect solution!"

The Pshisker descendant: "Not so perfect. A loaf is a loaf and not a person. Why is this distinction important? First, because the former is not capable of feeling pain, but the latter is. Second, because one loaf is exactly like another, while no two people are the same. With the bread there is no true process of selection."

Another disappointment. The tears, which had nearly stopped, started again. The sun, meanwhile, was flattening out at the bottom, and looked like a Bulgarian hat.

Rabbi Wolf-Kitzes brightened once more: "Do not despair. The one-hundred loaves reminded me of the one-hundred women! The heathen demands that of this number he be given one to use for his pleasure, otherwise the whole community shall be defiled. The ruling is that no woman may be surrendered—except that one who is already unclean, since that would do her little harm."

Baggelman: "I do not understand. Are we to write down the names of fifty harlots?"

Nomberg: "No, no. The principle is, one may allow the defiled to be defiled. Thus we may hand over farmers to farm, or even those already dying—the aged, the critically ill—to die. I wholeheartedly support the interpretation of Rabbi Wolf-Kitzes!"

The light in the room was draining, like puddles, away. You could see it lifting off the walls. The last of the sun dropped beneath the line of rooftops. Eveyone knew this was their last chance.

"And what is the opinion of the Most Pious?"

"A negative opinion," announced the descendant. "I am shamed even to think of women of that kind."

"What says the Rabbi of the Fur Trimmers?"

Kornischoner, with much difficulty, shook his head. "No." His final word.

"Ah," said Dorka Kleinweiss. "The vote is two to two."

The dusk was now so thick that the Jews had to grope for the backs of their chairs. They sat in them, not noticing that the Rabbi from Yambol was no longer unconscious but, on the contrary, sitting upright, rubbing his swollen eyes.

"What am I?" Lunt asked. "Living or dead?"

"Rabbi!" the Council members exclaimed. "Can we make the list or can't we? Tell us! Break the tie!"

"Alas, living," said the Rabbi, whose back was humped.

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"Speak! Tell us what to do!"

Lunt looked at the Judenrat. Impossible to tell whether or not he could really see them. He smiled. "Jews, you don't know?"

"No! We can't make a list and we can't not make a list! Where is the logic in that?"

On that Rabbi's face there was a dreamy expression. "Look what they did to my sportcoat. They ripped off the sleeve."

Urinstein leaned forward. "Tell!"

Lunt did. "We have to kill each other and the last person alive has to kill himself. I saw that at once. That's why I fainted."

There was absolute silence. Not even the sound of breathing. The white plates on the table were the brightest objects in the darkened room. After some time Schpitalnik remarked, "It's a good idea."

"Hee, hee," Popower tittered. "We could resign after all."

Paradyz was actually laughing. "Ha! Ha! Like at Masada! We would be written up in history!"

"Ha! Ha! Ha!" Others were also laughing. "I would like to see their faces! When *they* come into the room."

Then Gutfreind, from five meters off, ran as hard as he could against the wall. "Look!" he cried. "I ran into it!"

"I am beating my head against the plaster surface! But nothing happens!" That was Philosoff.

Then everyone ran this way and that, trying to think of a way to put Lunt's plan into effect.

"Choke me," said Wolf-Kitzes to the Minister of Industry and Labor, "and I'll choke you!"

"What if I unscrewed the bulb from the lamp? And then put my finger into the socket? We could do that, one after the other!" The Scotch Hotel waiter stood on the table and removed one of the unlit bulbs. Then he wailed, "It only tickles!"

Said Kornischoner, "I don't have to kill myself! I'm not even alive! Yesterday I produced sixteen powder puffs, five rejected. For this I was given only as much soup as could be soaked into one slice of bread. The fewer puffs I make, the less food they give me, the smaller my strength to make puffs the following day. It's a vicious circle!"

"This is awful! It's so hard to kill a person!"

"I have it! Let's throw ourselves out! Onto the cobblestones!"

"Yes! That's the way!"

There was a rush for the window, a big jam-up. Two or three members tried to pull up the sash. Then the ones in front noticed, in the lamp light, the men in black uniforms below. "Watch out!" they warned. "They'll see us!" Then they all whirled around and ran back

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to the table, where they dropped in despair into their chairs.

Somebody said, "It was too low anyway. Only two stories." Then it was quiet again.

In not much more than a whisper, Fried Rievesaltes finally spoke. "Ladies, gentlemen, Rabbis. I am sure you have noticed my buttons, those on my vest and the matching ones on my cuffs. These are real pearls. Is there anyone here who knows what a pearl is? I shall tell you. Long ago each one of these buttons was inside an oyster, the kind that people eat in Paris, France. Indian boys dive for these oysters at the bottom of the Indian Ocean. This button here, which cost at Palfinger's one-thousand zlotys, I am not speaking of the mounting and trim, was at one time nothing but a grain of sand. It's a fact, Jews! This sand annoys the oyster, which makes a ball around it, the same as a gall stone, or a stone that is passed through the kidney. See? How smooth? How shiny? This takes the oyster years and years. Many times I thought how delighful to be an Indian pearl-diver boy. The Indian Ocean is blue. Here, feel it, Minister Verble. Minister Baggelman, you feel it, too. You have to open a thousand shells before you get this good a pearl. Those brown boys have just a scarf wrapped around them, and they drive down carrying a heavy stone. Past all the different varieties and kinds of fish. I read they can stay under at one time five or six minutes. I also read it's like a garden there, with the pink rocks and the sea flowers. It was not my fate to be one of those people. My fate led me elsewhere."

The moon-faced Minister, while he was speaking, tore the pearls from his clothing. Then to the amazement of the Jews, he tossed the matchless collection onto the Chancellory floor. "Years and years and years," he repeated. It was not clear whether he was referring to the time it took the oysters to manufacture the gems, or to the decades of suffering that Rievesaltes had undergone—yes, and inflicted—in order to pay Palfinger for them.

"A fortune," Schpitalnik said.

"No," said the head of the Jewish police. "Only sand. *This* is the fortune." So saying, Rievesaltes took from his jacket pocket a small vial filled with oblong white pills. He took the cap off and distributed them about the table. "Priceless! Priceless! Who would not give for just one of these pearls all that he owns?"

"What's inside?" Verble asked.

"Darkness. In just five minutes. Painless darkness. Can you think of a more valuable gift?"

And without more ado, using the dregs in his wineglass, Rievesaltes gulped his tablet down. There was a gasp. No one stirred.

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Rabbi Lunt: "They say that in Paradise the sky is gold and the roadways are lapis lazuli. In other words, not darkness, Jews: light." Lunt swallowed the capsule. So did Baggelman, and, a half-moment later, Miss Megalif did, too.

Popower stood up at his place. "Everybody wants to live! That's obvious!" Then he put a pill on his tongue and drank it down with a sip of wine.

"A toast of thanks to the Minister of Security!" exclaimed Philosoff, raising his glass. The Ministers of Culture and Entertainment, of Public Health, of Water and Power, likewise lifted their goblets and swallowed their pills.

Thus, in turn, all those in the room followed suit. The Minister of Justice was last. "If only there had been a breakthrough at the Kiev front," he said, rolling the pill in his cheek until, by accident almost, it went down.

"I don't feel any different. I feel just the same," said Rabbi Wolf-Kitzes.

"Ha! Ha! So do I! No! Wait! Now I am light-headed!"

"Minister Verble," said Gutfreind, "I am definitely light-headed, too."

"Yes! Yes! It's as if I drank a bottle of wine!"

Then there was a calm. Everybody was sitting around the long table, with his or her head propped on an elbow, like a person who is feeling bored. The silence continued. Philosoff closed his eyes. So did Popower. Baggelman, of Industry and Labor, let his head fall onto his folded arms. About two minutes had gone by altogether. Finally Verble, the former rag-picker, weakly said, "Would the Minister of Justice tell us again about Sarah Bernhardt? About the *cafe-crême*?"

Margolies' chin was on his fists. He could not speak above a whisper. "Gladly. It was at the Scotch Hotel. Bialystok. 1900. The curls of my hair, all on one side. She motioned for me. Forward I glided. A pot of hot milk, a pot of hot coffee, the saucer and cup. Now the cup is before her. Now with both hands I grip the silver handles: skillfully I pour out an equal measure of coffee and milk. A three star hotel. A cigarette in a holder."

The voice of the waiter trailed away. Everyone's head had fallen down, either onto his arms or the back of his hands, or directly onto the table. Another moment went by. Kleen lifted his head up. "It's not working," he said; but then, seeing how dark it was, he changed his mind.

And that, Ladies and Gentlemen, is how the Judenrat in our town finally came to a decision.

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M. Mitscherlich-Nielsen

PSYCHOANALYSIS AND FEMALE SEXUALITY

It is clear that Freud's observations and the conclusions he drew from them were dependent on the scientific knowledge of his time and the judgments and prejudices, the ways of thinking and seeing of his society. In reality, however, his ideas and theories about the development of woman had less to do with biology and physiology than he was willing to accept. Freud's "misconception of himself as a scientist" once more became evident here. Only to a superficial view does he appear to follow the scientific ideas of his time about physical energy.

Undoubtedly he also shared some of the typically male prejudices of *fin-de-siècle* bourgeois society about woman's nature and vocation; nevertheless, in my opinion he made an unprecedented contribution to her liberation from a hypocritical sexual morality. With the aid of his method it was possible for the first time to see clearly the motives behind the selfish male idealization and concurrent infantilization and degradation of woman. As early as 1910, in his "Contributions to the Psychology of Love," he was able to explain plausibly the unconscious origins of masculine ambivalence toward women—the tendency to divide women into whores and saints—by tracing it to the son's Oedipal jealousy. Freud thus succeeded in breaking the prohibition against thinking about sex. This prohibition was one of the most important factors in creating the qualities and intellectual limitations that had before seemed inherently female, but are actually culturally determined.

The original demands of the feminists were for professional equality. Today their demands diverge in many respects from those of their predecessors in the first half of this century. Equality of opportunity in education and profession, equal pay for men and women, day nurseries for working mothers, etc., are still demanded, but these requirements appear increasingly old-fashioned compared with the far-reaching declarations of war that proclaim a "woman's revolution." Today women are fighting for a fundamental transformation of

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society by women—based on specifically female needs, feelings, and ways of thinking. Evidently they too half unconsciously share the idealized belief of many men in an inherited female principle that can bring redemption from the rationalizing, egotistically hierarchical, and destructive male philosophy of competition. Such notions unmistakeably combine a rational assessment of the consequences of men's belief in their superiority with irrational female fantasies of salvation.

Still we should not overlook the fact that it was precisely the exclusion of woman from male competitive and supremacist thinking, the special mode of her education, which frequently brought her advantages of character such as greater sensitivity and capacity for love. And I certainly do not mean to dispute that woman's political, economic, and social situation can be improved by her alliance and solidarity with other women. But it does not seem to me sensible to make man the enemy or to exclude him *a priori* as a potential partner in the struggle for a more just world. It is not at all uncommon, however, for feminist groups today to retreat completely into themselves. Lesbian relationships are cultivated on the assumption that men are incapable of understanding the female psyche. Not all feminists, of course, aim at a revolution under lesbian auspices, but among intellectuals such prominent figures as Simone de Beauvoir believe that only a lesbian relationship can fulfill a woman's capacity for experience while contributing to her liberation from male supremacy. In her view, only "the destruction of the family and the myth of the family and the myth of motherhood and of maternal instinct" can end the oppression of woman. Similar opinions are put forward in Alice Schwarzer's book *The "Little Difference" and its Big Consequences,* which very quickly became a bestseller in Germany. According to Schwarzer it is sexuality that perpetuates the oppression of woman. At the center of her interest are the experience and psychic working-out of female sexual functions. Oral-genital intercourse or the manual stimulation of the clitoris are, according to her, more gratifying for woman than coitus. Therefore she concludes that the communication of women with one another, including sexual communication, is greater and more satisfying than that between women and men. The idealization of lesbian relationships here is apparent, especially if one compares the reports of lesbians in her book with those of the exclusively harrassed and oppressed heterosexual women who are represented.

Once women become aware of their degradation and mental deformation their anger is not easily suppressed, and so long as an uncritical presumption of male superiority continues to manifest itself

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the clash between male and female prejudices seems unavoidable. For many feminists Freud is the number one enemy; of all the factors that have contributed to maintaining a male-oriented social order, one of the most decisive, in their view, is Freud's theory regarding the psychosexual development of woman. This attitude in psychoanalysis is most prevalent in English-speaking countries, above all in the United States, where psychoanalysis succeeded in establishing itself and accommodating itself to the existing social systems. By contrast, in Germany psychoanalysis was expelled by Hitler, who managed to suppress its critical truth as "Jewish erosion of ethical values." Consequently, psychoanalysis had great difficulty in establishing itself in Germany after the war. Even up to the present it has only been able to gain a limited measure of social recognition. In the beginning the "New Left" took a special interest in it as a result of the teachings of Marcuse, but in the course of time people who embrace political positions of this sort have increasingly revealed an anti-psychoanalytic attitude, according to the extent of their loyalty to Marxist-Leninist dogma. This does not, of course, stop many supporters of the so-called "New Left" from receiving psychotherapeutic treatment. As for German feminists, they tend to be ambivalent in their view of psychoanalysis, many sharing their English-speaking sisters' attitude, though in a less committed way.

As we know, the psychoanalytic concept of penis envy has been the focus of feminist attack. Freud believed that he had observed that women were more envious than men; he traced this to the female anatomy, which he supposed that women regarded as inferior. Feminists consider this theory of Freud's the incarnation of a male prejudice that has contributed to the maintenance of patriarchal social conditions. They stress that they do not envy the man's penis but his great social and professional freedom, which is a reality created by men and not the expression of a naturally superior anatomy.

This line of argument confuses the unconscious and conscious consequences of century-old social arrangements and psychobiological developments. For this reason the psychoanalytic concept of penis envy has been largely misunderstood. Many feminists argue on a purely intellectual level and are not prepared to recognize the existence and significance of unconscious factors. In a recently published book, *Psychoanalysis and Feminism,* Juliet Mitchell has examined the statements of leading feminists on psychoanalysis, revealing numerous misunderstandings that arise partly out of ignorance, but are primarily traceable to a particular set of assumptions. Admittedly, certain psy-

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choanalysts can be attacked with justice when they separate the child's development from social circumstances and regard the psychosexual phases as subject exclusively to internal psychobiological laws. Still, besides the unconscious and the social factors, we must take into account the biological factors that are intertwined with them. Although Freud overestimated the psychic effect of the anatomical difference between the sexes—and sometimes underestimated sociocultural influences—and although he unmistakably fell victim to some of the prejudices of his time, we should not underestimate his brilliant and subtle gift for observation. For although his theories about women were one-sided in many respects, no one could equal him in pointing out feminine psychic developments and structures of behavior formed during centuries of oppression. The young girl's psychosexual development was not a mirror image of the boy's, as Jones and Horney assumed. Freud was primarily concerned with the description and analysis of psychical processes. In response to our criticism that he failed to take the psychic consequences of social injustice sufficiently into account, he would very likely have reminded us that we too, like others before us, underrate the influence of conscious and even more of unconscious fantasies and emotions on our perception and psychic assimilation of the environment.

Freud himself was deceived by such an error when at the beginning he took his female patients' reports of their seduction by their fathers at face value, as descriptions of genuine external reality. Without his gradual and laborious realization that these stories represented mostly "the vicissitudes of instincts"—repressed infantile wishes that subsequently assumed the character of psychic reality—psychoanalysis would never have come into existence and the Oedipus complex would never have been discovered. It is important to stress this fact repeatedly, for all too often we revert to a pre-Freudian stage of thought, speaking as if there is a directly perceptible, conscious cause-and-effect connection between psychic experience and social or biological events. Even Wilhelm Reich, who made efforts in the cause of the liberation of both sexes, ultimately fell victim to simplification. For him fantasy was fact: if it failed to reflect external reality it was seen as neurotic and irrelevant. According to Reich, neurosis would vanish in a society freed of all sexual repression. He was of course unacquainted with Marcuse's concept of repressive desublimation. Yet in his own private life, sexual liberation had limits determined by sex: in accordance with the old double moral standards he judged male and female marital infidelity quite differently, as the biography by his wife, Ilse

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Ollendorf-Reich, makes clear. He measured human maturity and health by the degree of sexual potency, purged of all pregenital fantasies, and the strength and intensity of the orgasm. Helmut Dahmer rightly argues that Reich, by making a fetish of genitality, revoked Freud's revolutionary extension of the whole complex of sexuality. And it is largely for this reason that Marcuse's utopian ideas contradict those of Reich. For Marcuse the world can only assume a more friendly aspect if genital and pregenital sexuality can be sublimated in such a way that areas of work and intellectual activity are also rendered more sensuous.

In order to see the limitations of Freud's view of female sexuality and the relationship of that view to the prejudices of the time, we need to consider the more controversial aspects of this area of psychoanalytic theory, including the claims of later dissenting psychoanalysts. Freud held the view that woman experiences herself as a boy during the first years of childhood, which are decisive for later development. Not until she perceives the anatomical difference between the sexes is she compelled to recognize what he called "reality": compared with the boy she possesses only a rudimentary sexual organ, the clitoris. The realization that she is a second-class being with a natural disadvantage is the reason she develops penis envy and finally decides in favor of being a woman—more precisely of wanting to have a child from her father as a compensation for her genital inferiority. Any woman who did not accept such compensation for her own inadequacy, who clung to her own completeness in fantasy, and who was prepared to give up clitoral sensations described as "phallic," had not, according to Freud, attained mature femininity. This mature femininity was expressed not only in the wish for children, but also in the capacity for vaginal orgasm, which is supposed to develop during or after late adolescence. In other words, Freud assumes that as a result of the psychic assimilation of the anatomical difference between the sexes, woman must feel herself to be destroyed. He considers it a sign of maturity when she begins to repress the knowledge of the existence of her clitoris and succeeds in the course of puberty in repressing the sexual stimuli originating in this organ.

Since Freud's time we have come to recognize that these ideas about immature clitoral and mature vaginal sexuality have in fact contributed to intensifying woman's feelings of inferiority and her envy of man. For under such circumstances a woman is compelled to envy man not only for his preferred social position but also because he, unlike her, is able to fulfill his genital needs directly, and therefore

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suffers less frequently than she does from difficulty in attaining orgasm. In our own time, which places great stress on maximum performance, including sexual performance, this deficiency touches an especially vulnerable spot in women's self-esteem.

Psychoanalytic theory begins by focusing on the existence of primary libidinal zones, by means of which it is possible to demonstrate the respective stages of development and the object-relationships and needs connected with them. Clinging to certain forms of gratification belonging to already abandoned stages of development has been understood as fixation of regression. We usually assume the causes of this to be infantile conflicts that are repressed—i.e., become unconscious, misunderstandings between adult and child, parental value-judgments that call into question the child's self-esteem, etc.

In later phases—for example, the Oedipal phase—of maturation, anal or oral forms of sexual gratification are rejected with disgust or shame. And in a similar way, Freud observed in an 1897 letter to Fliess, during puberty the young girl turns against her clitoral sexuality, which Freud supposed to be a relic of her masculine-phallic phase. It is amazing that such a critical thinker as Freud did not recognize the pubertal girl's shame, her repression of sexual impulses, as the result of social demands and values, but believed instead that he was seeing a psychobiological process of maturation. The adolescent girl's unconscious comprehension that she is "second-class" is identified with "maturity." In the "Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality" Freud explained the need for female sexual repression in puberty as an essential stimulus for the male libido.

In view of Freud's recognition of the effect of society's attitude to sexuality and his awareness of how much the double moral standard stood in the way of free development of woman's potentiality, it is all the more astonishing that at the same time he could assert that woman's inhibited sexuality was the precondition for man's developing a full sexual and emotional desire for her. Since Freud's own time, we have gained considerable evidence that there is no biological foundation for such a law of sexual interaction, that is, man's capacity for sexual arousal does not depend on woman's attitude of denial. Experiments by the English scientist Michael on Rhesus monkeys have demonstrated that the sexual activity of males is dependent on the females' needs and hormonal state. Even if human sexual relationships are more complicated and more subject to disturbance, we know that in the course of sexual relationships of some duration male potency often becomes dependent on the woman's sexual desires. In my opinion it is

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only in a society that accepts unquestionably the rule of the "strong" man as a natural law that the idea of the conquest and subjugation of unwilling women could acquire a sexually stimulating effect, and appear also in women's fantasies—for example in the pleasurable violation fantasies well known to every psychoanalyst—and in masochistic character traits and many aspects of behavior regarded as typically feminine.

Recent research has also clearly disproved the embryological theory that the clitoris is a vestigial male organ. The inductor theory of primary sexual differentiation has been corroborated by embryo tests, which even showed that the embryo in the first few weeks is neither undifferentiated nor bisexual but phenotypically female. In order to make the originally female organs of generation male, the genetically male embryo needs the hormone androgen. The development of femininity, on the other hand, represents an autonomous continued maturation of the hereditary pre-disposition. In their first embryonic stages of development, therefore, both sexes are phenotypically female; the clitoris is part of the female genitals from the very beginning. It is important that there be no misunderstanding here: our intention is not to overemphasize the role biology plays in psychosexual development, but to define that role clearly so that erroneous ideas of Freud's, deriving from incorrect biological theories of his time, can be clearly recognized. To repeat: since the clitoris is not a vestigial male organ, but rather, the penis is an enlarged clitoris, there is no biological basis for claims regarding the girl's phallic phase. Thus it can not be seen as a sign of biological maturity when the woman gives up clitoral for vaginal arousal in the course of her development. Clitoral arousal is a physiological part of complete sexual satisfaction for a woman. The exclusively vaginal orgasm is a myth—although that does not mean, as is often falsely maintained nowadays, that there is no vaginal orgasm: many women experience it. And just as this claim must be rejected, so too must the claim made by many feminists that coitus is itself unnatural. (That is hardly to deny, of course, that it can be performed so brutally and insensitively as to become something else entirely.)

Freud's statement that children scarcely notice sexual differences in the first years of their lives seems valid to most child-observers and psychoanalysts, although the first occurrence of such perceptions is now considered to be earlier than Freud had thought—as early as the end of the second year of life. But it still has not been proved that both sexes experience themselves primarily as "little men." And it is less the primary femininity of the embryo that provokes hypotheses to the

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contrary than the recognition that both sexes originally seek to identify, in their infantile way, with the source of the satisfaction of their needs—the omnipotent mother. René Spitz's observations also support the assumption of a primary "femininity" arising through identification with the mother and manifesting itself above all in the internalization of protective and anxiety-alleviating behavior. The course of the child's further development, which centers on an increasing ability to perceive reality, (whether that of the anatomical difference between the sexes or the different social valuation placed on the sexes), more and more compels the child to relate its psychic growth to its sex. The boy resists his close infantile identification with his mother, while the girl frequently perceives herself to be second-rate.

Freud's own theories arose from his interpretations of his patients' memories, fantasies, dreams, neurotic symptoms and modes of behavior. For him the daughter's turning towards her father was determined not by natural feminine needs, but by complicated, conflict-generating psychic transformations of certain perceptions, and often resulted from conflicts with the parents, especially the mother. I stress this in order to recall something that is all too easily forgotten by critics of Freud: namely that psychoanalysis is always concerned with the *psychic* working-through of conflicts inevitably influenced by the various phases of psychobiological maturity, and experienced with the parents or their internalized object-representations. Freud's error in seeing a sign of psychosexual maturity in the transference of sexual arousal from the clitoris to the vagina was, in my opinion, due not merely to contemporary misinformation about physiology, biology, and the embryonic development of the genitals; it also derived from the idea of male supremacy in society, which demanded female passivity as a counterpart. If women's sexual needs are no different from men's in intensity and activity, and cannot be satisfied only in passivity or masochistic pleasure in subjection, then this is a threat to the whole notion of male supremacy. Indeed, Freud showed in various places in his works that both sexes have an equal need to repeat passive experiences and traumatic impressions, in order to be able eventually to overcome them. Why should the same thing not be true in the case of female sexuality? But in this particular case, in Freud's account, the need for activity and control is not seen as a progressive development but is instead devalued as a regression to the phallic stage.

It is worth noting that Freud's theories about the origin and development of penis-envy were not shared by all psychoanalysts. Karen Horney's views, for example, differ significantly. In her opin-

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ion the discovery of the anatomical difference between the sexes alone cannot explain penis envy. It is the narcissistic overrating of the process of evacuation in the anal phase, the infantile exhibitionism in which the boy is allowed, indeed encouraged to grasp his member while urinating, which is understood as permission to masturbate, which first leads to an understandable envy of the boy and his—in a child's view—superior sexual equipment and freedom. This infantile penis envy is generally observable, but is of only passing importance. Horney could not discover the lasting effect on the later development of the woman that Freud attributed to penis envy. She considered that this could only be caused by neurotic development mostly initiated by traumatic experiences at the time of the Oedipal conflict. What Horney describes as "secondary penis envy" is the expression of a defense against Oedipal wishes, which cause anxiety. The result of such anxiety is that the girl renounces the father as love-object and identifies with him instead. According to Horney, this identification with the father, which is the occasion of her making comparisons, is what first gives rise to feelings of envy of the male and initiates the girl's phallic phase. Although Horney's observations are valid in many cases, in my view she underestimates the lasting effect of traditional, generation-old parental identifications and values—especially the mother's—on the girl's early development. The effect of these values begins at birth and makes it possible for the little girl to experience her lack of a penis as a palpable proof of her own inferiority. Clinical experience tends to support the belief that the girl's phallic phase—i.e., her wish to be a man—is variable; it does not represent a generally observable, rigid stage of development, but depends rather on the parents' attitude to femininity. Parental modes of behavior at the time of the Oedipal conflict, or even earlier, may often lead to the girl's identification not with her mother, but with her more highly valued father. Although it is true that we can often observe little girls reacting enviously when they notice the boy's phallic exhibitions, in my own judgment the corresponding perception of a physical lack can only be considered the cause of a female sense of deficiency if the parents share society's low valuation of women and—consciously or unconsciously—express this in their attitude to their daughter.

Melanie Klein and Helene Deutsch, two of the best known psychoanalysts to concern themselves with female sexuality, see the object-choice of the father and his phallus as a derivative of the original turn to the mother's breast, and the female French psychoanalyst, Chasseguet-Smirgel, sees penis envy as a derivative of the envy of an

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omnipotent mother whom one can become independent of and compete with only by possessing an organ that she lacks. But the notion that the devaluation of woman by both sexes originates exclusively in infantile anxiety and feelings of hatred and envy of the omnipotent mother seems to me rather myopic. Although many of Chasseguet-Smirgel's observations are plausible, like Melanie Klein she ignores existing social influences: both of these observers trace all later psychological developments back to the early mother-child dyad (which is continued in the relationship with the father), without considering that the child's upbringing, even in its very earliest stages, is stamped by contemporary social prejudices. It is certainly important to take infantile factors into consideration in attempting to comprehend adult behavior. But if we overlook the part played in a child's upbringing by contemporary social values, we run the risk of describing the parent-child relationship as if it took place in a kind of closed room, without connection with the multifarious influences of the environment. But it is precisely this meeting between the influences of infantile fantasies and experiences and economic and sociocultural conditions that is responsible for the behavior of both sexes in society. If psychoanalysis regards the child's earliest relationship to its mother as the sole cause of all further development or, like Freud, traces the development of female character all but exclusively to the psychic consequences of the anatomical difference between the sexes, then woman's struggle for liberation from *social* pressures appears irrelevant, and her hope for change in her general situation is unfounded. Similarly, tracing contempt for women exclusively to a defense-reaction against the unconscious envy of the omnipotent mother may also lead to resignation in the face of larger sociocultural tendencies to devalue women. Theories of this kind, which focus too exclusively on very early child-mother relationships, may help us to understand why some feminists are so hostile to psychoanalysis. On the other hand, psychoanalysis teaches us to distinguish between the conscious and the unconscious, the real and unreal causes of the envy of man, and psychoanalytic insights can therefore help us to determine when our experiences of oppression are subjective and when they are objective.

The controversy over the notion of masochism as a typically and ineluctably female attribute is also worth considering in the present context. Freud thought that upbringing, the attitude of society, and the psychic consequences of her biological-anatomical fate left woman no alternative but to turn her aggressions against herself. Indeed masochism was regarded as the precondition for her being able to enjoy sexual

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relations at all. For Helene Deutsch, as for Freud, masochism was a specifically female attribute that helped women to have ecstatic experiences; hence Deutsch described the act of giving birth as the greatest masochistic ecstasy, the climax of a woman's life. For this, women would gladly sacrifice any chance of creativity. Feminists have reacted strongly against this account of a woman's supreme bliss. In *The New Chastity*, Midge Decter reports that feminists now no longer struggle only for the same rights as men but expect society to bring about liberation from the burden of child-bearing itself and the social restrictions connected with it. Since Aristotle men have regarded women as imperfect beings—or as incomplete men, as Thomas Aquinas maintained. It is, I think, possible to detect in such negative judgments a male defense against feelings of deficiency: for example, against an unconscious birth envy. And it often seems that women today are depriving themselves of precisely those opportunities for satisfaction and self-realization for which men unconsciously envy them. One asks oneself, therefore, whether some feminists, in their attack on motherhood and giving birth, have not made an unconscious identification with the envious aggressor.

There is no doubt that it is valuable to get to know oneself and one's feelings better. Many young women, however, now devote themselves to forms of pseudo-emancipation that threaten to come to a dead end in narcissistic striving for a life of "their own," for a form of "self-realization" based upon misunderstanding. They often fall into a kind of anti-maternal attitude, if not rejection of all loving partnerships. What was formerly an uncritical adoption of male judgments, combined in many cases with a tendency of wives to mother their husbands, has in these young women turned into a narcissistic impatience with regard to the male partner's weakness, whether great or small. Only fantasy, not a real relation to the man, seems to promise satisfaction. In general, these fantasies are concerned either with pure sex with masculine super-potency, or with a longing for a partner who represents their own ideal self or an admiring, protective parent figure. Male fetishistic needs, in which women serve only to compensate for male narcissistic deficiencies, are all too obviously adopted wholesale by these young women themselves in their female self-realization. Not only unenlightened males but some psychoanalysts as well have declared that women are unable to be creative or to achieve anything significant in matters of intellect, in politics or the professions, or that they have rejected such endeavors as forms of "phallic" behavior. In contrast, when a man has sublimated his mother-identification, as in

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the case of an artist, a tailor, or a baker, or in the caring and educating professions of doctor and teacher (and passively listening analyst), nobody has denigrated him as feminine or even as "vaginal" as a consequence.

In sum, psychoanalysis reveals examples not only of female penis envy, but also of male birth envy; moreover, we are increasingly confronted with the fact that just as often as a woman wants to be a man, so too the man also has the unconscious wish to be a woman. This wish makes him envious of the women who can be what is denied to him. It is well known that envious people begrudge respect and success to the people they envy. Opinions and modes of behavior born of unconscious envy are not infrequently rationalized, as when men adopt current prejudices about women's bodily and intellectual inferiority and use them as a justification for their own attitudes. The young men of the leftist student subculture are no exception to this. The same tendencies to disdain and degrade women occur among them as in all other social groups: and this is remarkable only insofar as the liberation from antifeminist prejudices and the struggle against oppression—including that of women—are part of their avowed political credo. Here, too, the causes can often be traced back to repressed envy. These young men behave unreliably—and often coldly and cruelly—in their sexual relationships, because their unconscious wish to be a desirable woman is unfulfilled. It is often only possible for them to love themselves in young, attractive girls; and such relationships can go well for only a short time. As soon as they recognize that these women are independent human beings whose feelings, opinions, or bodily shapes do not correspond exactly to the picture of the beautiful young girl they unconsciously wish to be themselves, they lose interest. An example: A student asks for psychoanalytic treatment because he suffers from states of anxiety and depression. He is a member of a left-wing organization and lives in a community of several men and women. He gives his full support to those of his female comrades who work for the improvement of the political and social situation of women. Like them, he is very indignant when confronted with typical social injustice and contempt toward women. But his own personal relationships with women are more complicated. He is incapable of having a union with a woman for any length of time, however agreeable she may have seemed to him at the beginning of their relationship. Every time he breaks off a relationship, he is without any feelings for the cruelty of his behavior. The young woman's grief and misery leave him more or less cold. He argues that

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she got more out of him than he from her: she had been completely happy with him, whereas in him a feeling of lack, of emptiness, of profound and sad yearning had always remained. On closer investigation, it becomes apparent that sudden wishes to humiliate the young woman have repeatedly made themselves felt. When he knew that a woman felt happy with him and was sexually satisfied in addition, then evidently he could not resist his feelings of envy. He felt increasingly a subliminal, inexplicable desire to revenge himself on his girl friend of the moment. It was a triumph for him when each time he could break with the girl at the very moment when her bond with him was especially strong.

Such contradictory emotional attitudes are not at all uncommon. On the one hand, women are despised and regarded as something by nature morally and intellectually inferior; on the other, they are idealized and identified with, and their liberation from sexual oppression and the double moral standard is fought for vigorously. Darl Kraus provides a compelling example of this attitude. His struggle for woman applied to an idealized, sexual version of her, an eternal feminine principle which "leads us on high." Yet he had nothing but mockery for the feminist movement of his time, which fought for a real improvement of woman's social and professional position.

As for the women of the left-wing subculture, if one observes them carefully one meets with modes of behavior that differ, at least externally, from the bourgeois individualistic modes, that is, from the mode of those women who seek introvertedly for self-realization. The young women of the left follow a group ideal when they behave in a sexually liberated way (which in their case often means promiscuously). Basically, they are looking for men who can satisfy their need for ideals. They do not, however, try to internalize such models, for example, by attempting to develop similar qualities in themselves; they do not attempt to make them a part of their own ego and its capabilities. Instead, they use sexual union as a way of incorporating the desired and envied ideals into their fantasies, and thus of increasing their own value. Their continually changing affairs are not love relationships in the adult sense; rather, they are, as Anna Freud says, "identifications of the most primitive kind, similar to those in the infant's early development, before the beginning of object-love." Such infantile-regressive attempts are condemned to failure, if only because the oral mode of identification by incorporation is an ambivalent process: by incorporating the desired object (as in eating) one simultaneously destroys it.

The socialist women's associations in Europe are fundamentally

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against feminism because in their opinion the battle of the sexes is of subordinate importance and only distracts from real revolutionary goals. Opinion, as always, is divided here, too. The feminist—rightly, in my view—insist that social change in the direction of greater humanity must be preceded by a change in the relation of the sexes. It is no doubt true that without liberation from social, economic, and family oppression there can only be emancipation for a few select women. But we must admit that a lasting change, not only of woman's position but of social values in general, will only be achieved when women develop a critical distance from this man-made culture and arrive at a better understanding of the precise nature of their own female development.

Ignazio Silone

1900–1978

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Kenneth Koch

REFLECTIONS ON MOROCCO

Essaouira

The concept is a country without adequate means of locomotion other than the camels' backs. But camels are not the sole mode of transportation. The French have been here. Morocco, a land of *café ou thé* and a place of conflicting opposites, a sort of Chinatown of the hubristic impulse of the imagination of the contingent. This will not give one an idea. I will begin with Essaouira. How Essaouira became the main subject of this work which was to have been on education and society in the Red Land, i.e. Marrakesh or Morocco.

Essaouira the real name is Mogador thank you very much. No the real name is what the name is now. The astonishing thing about Essaouira: the medina constructed by a French architect captured by the Sultan of or numbered I forget which. The medina (arab city) is all straight lines. The girls' liberal faces there are shaped like valentines. Outside, some little fame related to soup.

Fish soup. The project of long days ahead writing *"Essaouira."* Seeing countless movies (all bad) on Morocco to help inspire my Essaouira. Pretending that is a person I love Essaouira. Essaouira Essaouira it is you. Your name is like licorice. I appreciate Mogador too. I just prefer Essaouira. Perhaps because that is the name you have now. And I who have never (never) been thinking of writing a travel book before. How my persistent impulses become unraveled!

The clouds' door opens & Essaouira appears. As I remember it, as it is hearing me now. Then it vanishes and Essaouira appears, a second one, then it vanishes, then comes a third a fourth a third. Now it is going backwards. How I love you Essaouira! Don't completely go away.

I was so hoping but then disease be carried away. No sir they are all out. And how nice to see them, sea urchins, again. Writing, it may be, is what you are like, Essaouira, a delineation and scaramouche of powers. Clouds of thought and feeling, stretched out. And an arbitrary mode. And a sharp left will take you to the sea.

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"Why would a nice young person like you ever come to Essaouira?" Have you heard, then, of the Hobos of Mogador? Of the Seven or is it Nine or Eleven Lost Women? I just wanted to stand here and blaze.

The long lines of sagebrush and withered grass and tackless ornaments of the seemingly endless but unstructuring desert. The cow who did not have a face. The dawn of selflessness. All this I found on the way to you Essaouira but in you I discovered La Mer, and La Mère. Both the Mother and the Sea. Historical, astonishing, and moving words.

I never will go with you to Essaouira. People and places. Some people seeming to "fit right in" with evening in Nome or bright afternoons on the Monday luck brokery exchange. But some not in Essaouira. Many not in Essaouira. Many to some might be better than each to be gathering around. A bold lackadaisical strip-mining effect clods hubristic Cataline mumps from low-strength strichnine-oriented buildings. The Frenchman didn't think of that. No Frenchman did! I did. An American did. Though owing something to Rimbaud.

Still I wonder why the French language which has given to English its flexibility in poetry or so it seems to me in and for the past hundred and a little more years why it in itself should be comparatively so limited and unable to spell out in words what it's overturned like a bubbling lexicon? There's no problem here in Essaouira that I can't solve, or at least fathom, but I know (or feel anyway) the French language would be stumping about, in the person of the poet. Ah the French poet. How unlike Essaouira you are. How unlike everything and everybody nothing and nobody is or are! That's one of the great truths from out of the Labyrinth. The Greeks said (of the Cretan buildings) "They just don't make any sense!" And so we have the legend of the Minotaur. What have you given us, Essaouira, of equal mythic humph stature?

And behold and behooey Essaouira answered from the vowel of the Earthatorium, "I have given you my rectangulated medina; in a way the opposite of the labyrinthine palace at Knossos. Reason without disorder. Or within disorder. So you make up the mythings." And so I said "All right" and am here beginning with mouths of praise.

Do you know how absolutely marvelous it is to take the English language into your mouth and turn it out of there like a twisting hurricane of irremediably believably and beautifully alarming words? Well I do and have for many years though sometimes this awareness leads one down into the worst spots of the medina of absolute fear and

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loneliness and worst of all despair at one's feeling so totally unable to do it. Oh! Muse, Angel of Desperateness, sustain me if I deal with this hard horrible subject for it really makes me feel as weak as an aphid who has just been hit by a glass of water. Her youthful uniform (breasts) betrayed no signs of despair, but next Monday in the arms of "Mogador"—Listen—the brave mocking bird is collapsing his cuckoo-song past the musty tri-pad of Scotch inventiveness and I am here without anguish of Mogador in my head but with true perfect anguish as if you began by holding a dead strangled duck and then you became it. Fish soup! It would be nice to be returning to your believable *rivages*! The world moves, but the earth's stone remains unshaken.

A nine o'clock deadline to return to Marrakesh. So we must leave Mogador, uh, Essaouira. It is beginning to rain now but not in Essaouira. The children are short and tall in Essaouira. Fish and many vegetables being sold from counter and stall. And the big market part where the sheep are. Some stunted fur. A dirty wool promise but we can get it clean later. There are some Arab songs. We live in terror but the surface we keep beautiful and clean, sometimes miraculously so, as here in the formerly called Mogador, a place you should visit during your life.

Interview with Pierre Sadi-Rab—12/28/72

PSR: What are your first impressions of Morocco?

K: I thought that would be a good question to ask you. One's "first impressions" being in fact lost amid a "desert of contexts," as John Ashbery once wrote. He said it about a poem but a poem is in a sense a semi-concrete entanglement of first impressions—or nothing.

PSR: I am glad you have decided to interview me. I am inspired to say some wonderful things.

K: Well, that's the way it usually is when things work out well. The secret is in some kind of exchange and response. You've lived here all your life?

PSR: Yes, except for two student years in Paris.

K: How did you like Paris?

PSR: It was awful.

K: In what way?

PSR: Everything. The people, the food, the architecture, the way of life, the way people feel and think. I find the whole French culture appalling.

K: I've always liked France very much.

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PSR: It is easier if one has not been oppressed by it.

K: I guess that's so. Didn't you ever get any pleasure from France at all?

PSR: My love life there was not bad, but I don't want to talk about that. I thought we were going to talk about education. You're a very odd sort of interviewer.

K: There are quite enough of the non-odd kind, I think. As for education, everything is quite obviously connected to it, don't you agree?

PSR: My love life in Paris seemed relatively unrelated to education as a matter of fact. Though I did "learn" a few things.

K: What?

PSR: I said, I believe, earlier, that I didn't want to talk about that.

K: An interview that is not completely free is a stunted sort of interview.

PSR: Call it whatever you like, I don't want to discuss my love life in Paris.

K: Do you feel those are things a man should not talk about with another man?

PSR: I certainly wouldn't talk about them with a woman.

K: Not under any circumstances?

PSR: None.

K: How do you feel your education has influenced you in this?

PSR: I don't see what my education has to do with it.

K: You were educated in a French school here in Morocco, were you not?

PSR: Yes. At the Lycée Muhamed Cinq.

K: Were your teachers French or Arab?

PSR: They were, without exception, except for the lone religious instructor, French.

K: Was all the instruction in French?

PSR: Yes, except in religion. Actually the religious instructor would tell us about other subjects too, and they were more fascinating to us when he did so, because they were being spoken of in our own, real language. Everything we learned in French seemed ephemeral, not really to touch us.

K: The girl, or girls, you loved in Paris, were they French or Arab girls?

PSR: I don't see what that has to do with education. I wish you'd in fact try to stick to the subject. I notice that I'm beginning to enjoy talking about it.

K: How can a man feel that his love life is unrelated to his education?

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If love represents and engages the highest feelings—

PSR: That may be more a Western idea than one of ours.

K: Maybe so. But your literature, both prose and poetry, is almost exclusively erotic in content. Surely that—

PSR: Neither love nor literature is anywhere near the top of our pantheon of values. Our highest, most real, and almost exclusive concern is Allah, our God. All other subjects and fields of concern are, compared to that, as dry leaves tumbling down the sides of a mountain.

K: And Allah is the mountain?

PSR: Yes.

K: How many different subjects did you study in each grade of school? I am talking now about school, say, when you were ten eleven twelve thirteen years old?

PSR: Every term we had seven subjects.

K: And of these religion was always one—but only one?

PSR: Yes.

K: Then your education must have seemed to you very wrong, unfair, disoriented, and askew. Since religion was the main topic—

PSR: You're absolutely right. My education seemed to me as poorly balanced, wrong-headed, and superficial as the entire culture of France.

K: Was poetry taught in your school?

PSR: We read poetry every year, either in one term or the other. Not for a whole term however. I would estimate we spent on poetry about one month a year.

K: Did you ever write poetry in school?

PSR: Never.

K: In America a good deal of that is done.

PSR: So I have heard. It is foolish.

K: Why do you say so?

PSR: Writing poetry has nothing to do with being in school. In school one should learn to master one's self and the world and to serve God.

K: Thank you very much.

Second Interview with Pierre Sadi-Rab—12/30/72

K: In our last interview you said that writing poetry should not be done in school because the purpose of being in school was to learn to master oneself and the world and to serve God. Do you see no way in

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which writing poetry, or indeed creating art of any kind, may help one to do those things—to serve God, for example, by writing a great poem in His praise?

PSR: It seems unlikely a little school child would be able to do that.

K: Well, a child at least could make the beginnings of such an attempt. The child could awaken in him- or herself feelings that he or she might otherwise not have had.

PSR: Ours is not exactly a religion of "discoveries about God and about our feelings about God" as your Western ones sometimes seem to be. We KNOW about God, know who and what He is, and we love Him. We worship Him, respect Him, and fear Him. I cannot imagine anything that I could "discover" about God. Indeed, perhaps, if I studied the ancient texts with the help of the sagest men of our world for many many years I might attain to some new detail of understanding, as a chemist might discover something new about the nature, say, of water. But, to continue with the analogy of water, it is its coolness, its wetness, and its cleansing properties that will be most important, no matter what else is discovered. And so with God's majesty, mercy, and might. It is hard, besides, to see how a school child, under the best of circumstances, could discover anything new about Him. And certainly nothing that would be to him of proper concern.

K: I was hoping to perhaps introduce the teaching of writing poetry into Moroccan education. I take it you think that would be a foolish thing to do.

PSR: Not foolish but hopeless. How idiotically chauvinistic and imperialistic even the best-intentioned of you Europeans are—

K: I am an American.

PSR: For me to all intents and purposes the same thing.

K: How imperialistic? why chauvinist?

PSR: Don't you really see it? You are trying, simply, to "introduce" to us, to our children, in the tenderest phases of their lives, your ruling idea of what the nature of God and experience precisely is—"discovery," "self-expression," and so on and so on. What if an Arab man appeared, as charmingly as you do here, in your country and announced his intention of teaching Fatalism to every American child before he was nine years old?

K: But fatalism—poetry is—

PSR: No, my friend. Your country will thrive on poetry, even poetry by children, doubtless, but mine goes forward on other seemingly but not necessarily truly darker paths. You should be more aware of what you are doing.

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K: Thank you, Pierre Sadi-Rab. You have given me some very interesting things to think about.

Interview with Solomon El Baid—1/2/73

K: You were going to tell me about the Jewish community in Morocco.
S: I can do that. I can speak a little more knowledgeably about the Jewish community in Marrakesh.
K: Would you do that?
S: Yes. There were, up till four years ago, about thirty thousand Jews in Marrakesh. As of now there are about four thousand.
K: Where have they all gone?
S: To Israel. The Jewish people here have been very afraid since the change in government.

(*K:* Here followed a long section about Jewish political problems in Morocco.)

K: What about you and your wife? Have you been tempted to leave?
S: Oh yes, tempted. But we have not left. I do not think we are going to leave.
K: Why not, if you are afraid?
S: Did I say we were afraid? Yes, we are afraid. But Marrakesh is our home. Morocco is our country. We don't want to go anyplace else.

Interview with Charles N., an American Resident of Marrakesh—1/3/73

K: How long have you lived here?
C: Ten years.
K: What do you think about it?
C: It's the only place in the world now to be. Where else can you be? Spain is finished. Spain used to be possible, but Spain is finished. Mallorca used to be beautiful, now it's completely finished. You can't live in Spain. Maybe in South America, sometime in the future, I don't know. Right now this is the only place.
K: The only place to live?
C: The only place it's even possible. You can't live in Spain now, in

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France, I can't stand that, America is impossible. I don't know how you can stand to live there. Everybody comes here. Everybody will come here. Then it will be ruined. It will be over. I will go someplace else.

K: What is the mysterious element your conversation seems to be about, i.e., the possible conditions for life. I mean, what is the actual content of the statement that "This is the only place to live"?

C: Just what it says. There is no place else. Look at Spain, look at France, look at America. Here it's amazing. They used to have it—it used to be—in Spain.

K: I don't understand what "it" is.

C: Stop it. You're putting me on. Everybody knows it. You feel it. You only have to come here, you feel it, and, if you care about it that much, you stay.

K: And that is how you stayed?

C: Yes. I came here and felt it. Spain was over. I had been living in Spain.

K: How strange we Americans are when you think about it, some of us anyway, with our endless quest for the "secret." It's curious to find it in a place. Is it mainly a question of feeling, of how you feel?

C: If you don't understand it—

K: I think I do. But it's a thing people usually aren't very specific about. They're mystical. To talk about it in another way might be interesting.

C: Americans are always looking for the interesting.

K: That's sort of what I was saying about you—living here. . .

C: That's not the same. You, I think, are interested in the "interesting"—it's from living where you do, I don't know, it seems very American—interesting facts, interesting tidbits, interesting data, this and that. And all for what? For nothing. To create more interest for interest for interest and so on ad infinitum, like a billion little fleas each chasing each other all over the place. What is it for? Here that doesn't happen.

K: What is there here instead?

C: I don't know if I can explain. But it isn't that. There is a kind of centrality to experience. A major tone. Just that.

K: It gives you that kind of feeling.

C: It is really here, it exists.

K: You receive from living here a main feeling. It makes you "feel proper"—the way for someone else, living with his grandparents might.

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C: Living with one's grandparents would be limiting.
K: Every situation is. Certainly living here is limiting.
C: But it is right. What is important is here.
K: How can it be here? That doesn't really make any sense.
C: Why not here? Unless you think it is nowhere. Do you think rightness in fact doesn't exist?
K: I think either it is a feeling that is different and will be in different places for different persons and it is endless and it is interesting and we could study that, or, if rightness or whatever causes right feeling or whatever you want to call it, if this exists, then surely it will not really exist in a place, though it may be there with the resider to reside, but it will be in a state of mind, of spirit body and mind the person has attained.
C: But we are not perfect. There are always chinks and cracks. Perhaps I have that attainment (how do you know?) but also a weakness which means that I can only find that rightness in this place.
K: I think what you are discussing is still mostly a feeling. I do not think there is a place. Yes, the place can help—or hurt.
C: Spain used to be the place.
K: I never lived in Spain. I was only there for a visit, in the early years of my marriage, with my wife and then later with my parents.
C: It's not the place. Now this is the place.
K: I wish we could be clearer—but I suppose we can't.
C: It's clear enough.
K: Thank you very much.
C: Good-bye.
K: Good-bye.

Jan. 5*th*. Ouarzazate, the South. One thing left out of this journal, as the F key is now missing from my typewriter, worse luck, but I can write on it anyway. Don't become panicked the way I used to about every little thing going wrong. I must have been impossible to live with. Inside my problems. Inside my mind. Inside my corporal entity. Inside my subculture. Inside my country. Inside the world. Certain characteristics solid there be fractured here. The man says he can't get the windshield replacement till tomorrow. When it will turn out he does not have one after all. So, endlessly into the future, I'll remain in you, Ouarzazate. What a nice name. Like a drunkard saying What is that? Ouarzazate. Essay on the availability of the light scent of horse

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manure on a January morning in Zagora where I am going next day. The smell of cigars. Are these really only a repressed sublimating affection for smell of our own excretions? Caramba! It's hard to believe. In my poem "On Beauty" I will write next year I will put that idea to sleep. Or let it rest, in any case. Now if we could open the "Any Case." So many things have been left there! It is so hard to know when, and what, to write. Should one not do it on holidays? on weekends? when other people are around? Is it wrong to be writing this journal? Shouldn't I be up and about? It is hot to be up and about. And I don't know where to be up and about to. Everything in this culture seems too structured for me to be merely and vaguely up and about in it. I guess I could start a school—but at this time of night? And Pierre Sadi-Rab didn't think very much of my ideas. Sans doute il a la raison de son coté. That doesn't sound like completely correct French. Well, onward!

Jan. 6. In the Western quarter of Ouarzazate we have discovered it, the Any Case. It is full as a bushel basket of clothes. It has dyed-red subject matter. Its daffodils cancel perceptions of a long-drying wall. It seems to be Morocco itself. Lots of children run about it excited. The children in this country—happy, beautiful, excited, a lot of them, as if they had been spared something. Then others who are begging, bruised, aslant, who seem deprived of something momentous. None of them like American children who seem comparatively like lollipop heads. The beauty of the human race as it passes from one age to another. Golden philosophies. Walking past the Any Case, in which so many things have gone on.

. . . .

Riding my bicycle up the hill to see Jean Johnson. Would living in Arab culture have deprived me of everything? Who, exactly, would I have been? Would that have been "more reality"? The idea of the degree of reality forbids and depresses me. If I shouted "I am I," that would be a case of very pale identity. French writers can go on like this for a long time—the "intimate metaphysics-cum deep suffering you will never know it" style. Are they influencing me here in Morocco? I do not suppose I could be influenced tonight by Moroccan (Arab) writers. If I were able to read them, yes. But they seem to be from very long ago—or else to be writing about superficial if "pressing" questions. Is my lack of being "pressed" an example of some sort of

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horrible exemption from reality? Do I wish to be part of a warm and embosoming culture? And if I do—Now you tell me, at my time in life, how on earth I am ever going to be completely satisfied? The idea is ridiculous. And yet here I am, forever on the hunt. . .

. . . .

If I could get to Zagora (if that non-arriving man would repair my car) and see the Blue Men, my life would have another chance at fulfillment. The Blue Men. They live in the desert. But what has that to do with me? And merely to see them. I don't want to be one. Perhaps I am not looking for happiness but looking for the most happy-making way to look for it. Like childhood dreams of judging a beauty contest. Miss America! the judge says.

. . . .

Moslem sex. Moslem girls. Moroccan beauties. Eyes. Eyes look great big over veils. All the face struggling up into the eyes. Veiled faces. What, under the veils, their expressions? Did you know there were people rather unlike you and me? What would you do under a veil? Try one on. Try smiling. Try licking your lips. You would probably not be frowning hideously.

What about this? A whole nation of girls and of women totally unavailable to you. And here you are walking among them, as if everything were perfectly all right. It's actually kind of nightmarish. Fortunately you are running on an electric motor which wakes you and puts you to sleep at regular times.

Seriously. What is one to make of an organization that, like art, involves and engages our most powerful impulses and directs them toward a historically comprehensible but personally unfeelable end, and that is called a country and is this gorgeous place Morocco, which gives impressions while taking away substance because the substance is just incalculably too much for us to bear? And is this true? It sounds too interwoven to be true. I reject it. It's just what I don't like about that kind of French writer I discussed. And now here it is morning. The muzzein is yowling to bust a clavicle. And my windshield appears on the breakfast table. It is Zagora today, on the wings of dawn. Blue Men, watch out. We'll soon be down there where you are.

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Interview with Jean Johnson

K: Do you remember me, Jean?
J: Why, Kenneth Koch. You haven't changed at all.
K: That's unusual. I haven't seen you for almost fifty years.
J: No, it couldn't be fifty. I'm not even fifty years old now.
K: I guess it was thirty-five. God how I used to love your big tits and your laughing aristocratic airs.
J: I liked your humor, your lean nervousness, and all, but you were such a kid. Others were more grown up. You didn't seem. . .
CHORUS: . . . to want the responsibility of a complete relationship with me.

(As the Chorus says this, Jean gets up and dances. Her dance is a highly stylized and symbolic version of a melancholy waltz. Kenneth watches her, fascinated. Finally, he stand up, takes off his shirt, and rushes toward her, to take her in his arms. But she has vanished.)

CHORUS: That was not the real Jean Johnson you saw but a phantom.
K: And the one I knew as a child?
CHORUS: She was real.
K: What else is real?
CHORUS: Only the movements of this dance.

(The Chorus rises and dances to the same waltz music as before. But Jean Johnson does not appear. Kenneth weeps.)

K: Illusion piled on illusion. Either superficiality of "pressingness" or nothingness. I must find what is in between. And now once again it is dawn. Was this only a dream?
HOTEL WAITER (shouting in Kenneth's ear): Mr. Koch! Wake up! It's the morning! The man from Marrakesh has come with a new windshield for your car!
K: That happened yesterday.
HW: Now it has happened again.
K: Thank you very much. Would you like to be interviewed? How long have you lived here?
HW: All my life.
K: I think my work on Essaouira may be almost complete.

More Essaouira

Not quite yet, though. I see that I have left out so much. And they

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are, many of these things, the same ones I put in. For example, the blue white rectangular quality of Essaouira. Most people go there and that's that. It's an afternoon, a morning, or a day. But many must go there, too, as I did, a dreamer of the present actuality, as if a street made up of different cobblestones could, for the carriage that went over it, be one huge uneven uncared-for stone. What is Essaouira? I love the name. Or rather I like it. One guidebook says it is a shame to lose its old name Mogador. I can imagine dreary discussions of this, grey wallpapers, snooty-looking people. Palm trees. But I like "Essaouira" better by far. "Mogador" has some obvious charm of an old-fashioned kind that completely puts me off it. Everyone knows how to respond to the word "Mogador." In this book you, delightful reader, may be responding to the word "Essaouira" for the first time. The long dusty path there. I've already said that. What did I not say. American poetry at the lesser levels has improved since I began this Essay, though at its higher levels I do not believe one could say that that was the case. Is this a kind of cultural leveling that is frequent in small histories of cultures? Let's walk into Eassouira and find out. You can't find that out in Essaouira. And I doubt you can find it out anywhere. How strange to be among these people whose front is as much as their back indifferent to everything I think and say and do. Yet not wholly indifferent. I always feel they would be surprised by the thoughts I was having because these thoughts would not seem to them significant. I think they, like others, are chiefly practical, but experience shows that once some little adjustment is made this is not necessarily so. Oops! I'm sorry. I almost bumped into that woman. She is wearing a veil as no one here does. As usual I am spending my life doing nothing. If I had never come to Essaouira, would my life be the same? I see the beard twitching, I hear the boredom. Are certain physical movements of our parents' and our own bodies in infancy the determining factors in our lives? The fortress she is that way and the market they are this. If I were at my typewriter describing this, instead of being here ready with the experience. Of course I am now. I would like to know what finally Essaouira

you are Essaouira
obviously palm trees I like your name

You have forgotten about Zagora and Ouarzazate. That's impossible. I just went back to Essaouira because that's where I began. Once the man fixed my windshield I knew I would never go back to Essaouira. It was like the first card dealt. You don't try to draw that again in the same game. Travel, at its utmost reaches, requires a new experience or gamble every time. In experience—you go back to the same girl and

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after two years of absence if, only if, you find that it is new, an Essaouira

post-Ouarzazate, after-Zagorian

what's that?

And other travelers to Morocco will relate

drifting experiences

Wasn't that great, absolutely great
And did you get the shift there?

what

the shrimp, the shift

there are some marvelous little ships

too bad, you missed them

I missed

SOMETHING!

Ouarzazate thou beautiful breasts of day
I know *thou* isn't plural, well neither are breasts
Is the ocean plural? then neither is breasts, are breasts
Sounding better this way

Ouarzazate Zagora down there in the desert the old old library, with books like a jewel, the terrible roadway, to get there by fuel, better at camelback or horse hoof, to see, among the divided triangle square at, far from (relatively) Ouarzazate, by Zagora, but distant by bad roads (as Germany is distant from grammar) this

old place

What was I doing exactly in Essaouira in Ouarzazate in Zagora? Say, well, you missed the best thing, the herpes of the mountain/I say to hell with that. At Ouarzazate I believe it was at the hotel upon whose bed I lay breaking my back to see the thin dawn line how easily I write now come out though probably scientifically it was in the window where an automobile flat top bottom lay fatly bulging in the summery Christmas dawn, there was one whom we gave a lift to and he left his shoes in the car in a paper bag and in some bizarre way we mailed them back to him no left them at a car agency with him in some way connected. Did he ever receive the shoes? But that is not in Essaouira.

Let us say, Ouarzazate, here's our lecture, a discussion of place

and of our liking for place

and of the influence of place

in our lives

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ENTIRELY IRRESPECTIVE OF WHEN IT HAPPENS AND OF WHO WE ARE

That disappoints sociologists but pleases poets. Philosophers long ago dismissed
From the classroom where anyone was listening may now cock an ear back-
Wards to see if at this new equality some sea urchins are starting to hiss
What a municipal monument! and I wonder always if my friends (two best ones) thought that this
That I always write about but not necessarily always think about most but just at certain times of emphasis
(Old fashioned poetry, you are a dead goat! wherefore I love thee for a sec and pick thee up
But then cast thee down again, O goat) I go backwards I wonder
If my friends knew (know) how stupid I am how dirty how shallow
They seem more instinctual, like these, but I am instinctual other
I mean otherwise but now and again I do wonder and now and again I say I wonder

UNEXPLAINED INDIVIDUAL FOUND STANDING IN OUARZAZATE

Am I the height and wonder of all civilizations? What the hell is my life getting at? If I conceive it chronologically, it is all some sort of dippy romantic (but slightly comic) tragedy but when I am not obliged to do that (how could I be, fat mountains?), I get to thinking like this, when everything is present, and that's when Essaouira and Ouarzazate are overwhelming and inescapable problems. Either everything has to be satisfied straight on or in backwards-forwards, which at least I began with by coming here first in a plane and then in a car. You whose message delights me! The trouble is you are spread out! No wonder we like big-breasted people. They

Give the illusion of eternity, the space time infinity that this topic seems to require
And Essaouira if you— I like better "thou"—art spread out
Besides, in a mathematical fashion, it is all to the good

And if you give me this feeling more than a larger city it is because if it is too large it is nothing. Sea urchins and the monument. The casbah. And the man puts the windshield on. I was about to say "Man"— Man puts the windshield on. Where have we been since our first houses? And what, aside from that first adjustment, have we been?
Surely Death will not find us unready for the water

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Certainly if we have been in water already we know death
Death is heat or air or water
But where in the shell of Morocco—
For, if death be the subject, Morocco like every other place is only a shell—
Can this be placed? Is it all from "displaced need"
Like the sculptures of ugliness? How much truth can there be in anything or in that?
I want to see the desert
And here it is. And the caravan moves on, the caravan of my thinking I might be crazy
No, not crazy, but pitching the wrong thumb, hitchhiking a ride in a totally opposite direction
From where I want to go, and I make an adjustment now and go in the opposite direction. If I had no money
There would still be a shortage of reality. That shortage is in me. Rather, I am the shortage. The shortage had an
Amazing experience in Morocco. Which was also completely ordinary. As it always is. Since no one knows what anything is about. Officially. As a matter of fact I suppose being so abstractly diffused while caring so much in some funny uneven kind of way protects one from the decadence of acting like a cup, ooohooo flopping around in somebody's hand. But so would a lot of other things would. I know there's one too many. Essaouira, farewell! I said that before. If my life means anything, it is that I am always forgetting just what it is that I want. How's that for meaning? I have found a way to be unsatisfied by everything and always somewhat pleasantly excited. Or painfully excited. What's Zen compared to that? What's Academia's compelling suture? it's compiling future? I want to know who has ever found anything as wonderful as being a strain—not the strainer or the strained, but the thing itself, held tight between two eternities (what is that?) like a dog, held on two leashes, by two enraged furies, the eyes of the world, the peacemakers of eternity (that word again, you would think I wanted to die, if you didn't know me better, it is more that in truth I would like to vanish, but into this prose study to live forever here but also be eternally writing, my ideal would be a text that was always writing, but then on the other hand I have never been aware of being interested in that, and I can't imagine actually as I read it over what it means— I have to get out of this sidetrack: I have something important to say), the stones that are never lying in the grass but are always bouncing around. And I'm held between them. They tug me.

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And I resist. I run and they chase me. They can never stop me from moving and I can never completely get away. What's Dante's Paradise compared to that? You always think I am kidding. I am trying to define happiness by what I've actually got and then go on from there. Afterwards we can have something to eat and drink and re-enter the process, you who seem more comfortable in the process but who are, I imagine, inside, like me, a watcher of Essaouiras. Do I love you for that? I don't know if I love you or have ever loved anything or anyone. I am a desert. Kill me. And now a town. Signed, "Zagora."

Coda

Morocco, Morocco, the interviews are done
Farewell, Part of the Continuum
Hello, Strangest Days
We appell you Conundrum, the world's greatest word
Your cities— Ouarzazate, Essaouira, Zagora— are like teeth
Part of an enormous jaw, which is You
And the seriousness of a discourse is not in a few details
And the burning soul of a human not available to see in a few frills—
What counts, counts. Childhood is over. Adolescence is over.
The great hunt for death has begun. But you know all of this is bullshit.
O transfer paper of the sun
There's no denying it's painful to leave anything
And in fact so painful do I find leaving
That to hell with it I am going to remain
Remaining is also a sort of leaving (I am sorry to
Have to say that!) so how except by prose can one stay
I can write about distractions
But I will always come back to you,
Essaouria which moved me so curiously,
Ouarzazate of the broken windshield.

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POEMS

Hōsai Ozaki

"FREE VERSE HAIKU" FROM *BIG SKY*

At Shodo Island

From August 1925, when he entered Nango-an, the inner sanctum of Saikoji Temple in Doshomachi, Shodo Island, Kagawa Prefecture, until April 1926, when he died there.

Before me, fish fly, showing off, in the island's sunset, where I've come

*

Daybreak's early on the beach, we bump into each other

*

Having come this far and writing a sudden letter

*

With a dog that started following me I don't know when, I'm on the beach

*

After seeing the town's Bon lanterns, I get on a boat

*

Having myself waited on by an island girl

*

I, a mountain priest's drinking companion, there's a round moon

*

Combing the plentiful hair, moonlit night

*

Having become a pickling weight, smug, a hunk of gravestone

*

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Wonderful boobs, here's a mosquito

*

The storm on a single willow, a daybreak bridge

*

In a storm, getting on with supper, mother and child

*

Storm over, the fool comes peddling fish

*

As I wash the sole of my foot, it becomes white

*

Stone mountain, insects chirp, sun darkens

*

This firefly doesn't glow, it's hardened

*

I've given the huge pine tree to sparrows, I've got this hut

*

A bit of the sea's visible, I've got a tiny window

*

There it was, my face, I bought the tiny mirror and came home

*

So far away I can't hear the sound of the waves, the sea, how blue

*

Making it my hut, many cockscombs have turned red

*

Ferociously mosquitoes buzz, at night, one skinny body

*

A dragonfly kindly comes to perch on my solitary desk

*

Four or five people quietly work, the salt beach darkens

*

Late night wheat powder spilled on the straw mat

*

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Pine cones, too, used for fire, the beans are ready

*

It's wet around the well, evening wind

*

Using up matches, in the sea wind, we talk

*

Having climbed the hill, I see all the solitary villages

*

Sliding wooden clogs under rainy camellia, he's come to visit

*

She doesn't know what to do with the beauty of her hair

*

Saying, I scold him and he cries, and then making him cry

*

Flowers variously in bloom, all for sale

*

Not enough morning to sweep in, only morning pine needles

*

An autumn wind stone gives birth to a child, it's that story

*

As if thrown away, watermelons go on getting fat

*

The woman in the newspaper on the wall is always crying

*

Having the sea wind pass through, always alone

*

Bon holiday has turned into rain, the island's tiny houses

*

Catching a cold, I stay put, not reciting the sutra, it's dead quiet

*

In the midst of only the sound of wind I draw water

*

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Potatoes eaten by rats, I was asleep

*

Under the Bon lantern I slept a night and left my hometown

*

For a child who's a little ill I buy goldfish

*

A wind blows, around the house, no flowers

*

Green paddies, coming back through them, spied on from a window

*

The mountain receiving the sea's sunset has nothing to hide

*

Houses are crowding the town, a peddler calls

*

Each time I drink water, I go out to pee, on the weeds

*

Good food in a ship, no place to put it

*

Fireworks go up in the sky, that's where the town is

*

I'm looking for a single flea, midnight

*

Althea flowers ended, a wind blows

*

Ran and caught up, in the wind

*

Shut tight, the paper doors full of holes

*

It was a dream toward daybreak when I drowsed

*

A late moon, shut out of the town

*

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Changing the paper door paper, a single tiny knife

*

Came out to an unexpected spot, on the road, autumn grass

*

The person who's clutching my shoulders doesn't have eyes

*

Pushing out of the lotus leaves and blooming, a flower, morning

*

Flowers being cut, an invalid watching

*

A beggar, with a rising-sun flag for wrapping things

*

Good weather for days, the festival's over, the island's huge pine

*

Bought an egg for each sleeve and came home

*

A festival, a baby asleep

*

Those hands, till when, beating the drum

*

A wet crow before sunrise is flying

*

The evening shower cleared up, I was given a big mackerel

*

A skink's cut off tail leaps in the sun

*

Althea nodding all day, it has darkened

*

A pilgrim praises the althea flowers, has a walking stick

*

On my way back from a funeral I got a little wet

*

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From the pipe showing my way, smoke is coming out

*

An invalid, recovered enough to arrange flowers

*

Morning haze, a pig comes out, a man comes out

*

It came as a stray dog and still is

*

He goes to dig mountain yams, putting on a *suttoko*

*

Like a human being, I have a fever from a cold, see

*

Efficiently sowed radish seeds and went away

*

Letting the evening mist stagnate, the salt beach, some people

*

Having become autumnal mountains, pressing to my desk

*

Watching a child baiting frogs, she's a harlot

*

After a long time there's rain, the sound of rain dripping

*

Singing a popular song of Tokyo, the island's lollipop peddler

*

Under a thick thatched roof, a telltale clock

*

Good at the samisen, the island's night old woman

*

I leave the paper doors open, the sea has gone dark

*

Driving huge bulls up the hill, the morning haze

*

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Taking the short cut through the field, he comes

*

I know the footsteps of the sparrow walking on the straw mat

*

With the sparrows chattering about tomorrow's weather, I'm sweeping

*

The storm has made a completely blue sky of it

*

In the window, the morning wind's potted flowers

*

Lonely as I am, fever gone

*

A fireless brazier's visible, it's the bed

*

Being blown in the wind, saying devotions

*

It's a tiny house, mother and child live in it

*

I'm lonely, I go to bed, I have no books

*

Blowing the evening sun against the bamboo grove

*

Moonlit night, there's a wind, alone coughing

*

Rice-gruel beginning to cook, the noise, the pot's lid

*

Seeing one or two fireflies, I visit a house

*

Swiftness flies, a bird, I go a mountain path

*

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The sparrows all at once are gone

*

Grasses and many flowers in bloom, a child staying home, on guard

*

Clipped the nails, the fingers, there are ten of them

*

For the ships that come, a single island

*

We decide to rent the house with a pickling stone lying about

*

I let touch-me-not seeds leap, but am still lonely

*

Hand on the skin of a night tree, I wait

*

Where the autumn sun shines, on a stone, I put down the child from my back

*

A floating weed with a tiny flower blooming in the wind

*

I look in through a hole on the paper door, still no one's there

*

The morning's pretty, and shaking bells, pilgrims

*

I have no vessel, I receive it with both hands

*

Morning moon, it turns into a storm

*

Autumn hill, I come out on a wide road

*

The mussel doesn't open its shell, it's dead

*

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I cough and am still alone

*

A train speeds a mountain fire

*

Quietly, a plectrum, left on the straw mattress

*

Chrysanthemums have all withered, a bit of the sea is visible

*

Along the flow I walk and stop

*

Seaweed screens, it turns into wind and snow, someone's on the boat

*

Tried to hold the dragonfly by the tail, and failed

*

They've finished sowing wheat, around the hut

*

Back from the graveyard, I'm still alone

*

In love, at age forty, pampas grass

*

What a round moon has come out, the window

*

Last night its bottom fell out, the dipper, the morning

*

After the wind calms, pine needles fall

*

I know the eyes in the snowed hood

*

I'm the only one who passed it, the winter-wasted stone bridge

*

After looking at the crimson leaves in the grove, I go visiting

*

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I go to pull radishes, they're in a field on the hill

*

Wheat sown, windy day after day

*

This morning's frost is dense, I go as a teacher

*

Nextdoor too, a rainy scallion field

*

Having shaven the whole crown, the freezing sky

*

Night work begins, the river sound

*

At the right moment a beggar came

*

Rain, falling on bush clovers and flowing

*

In cold calm, with sails lowered, the masts

*

The hut's paper door open, am buying small fish

*

Beating the fish-shaped wooden drum of December

*

A pine cone, without changing, has turned into fire

*

The wind, tiring of blowing on the blue grass

*

The storm died down at night, I'm drinking hot water

*

A gun, glinting, deep snow

translated by Hiroaki Sato

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Two Poems by Tom Disch

WHAT IT WAS LIKE

Like a wine that burns the tongue
And leaves it thirstier, like glimpses
Into lit interiors from the windows
Of slow-moving trains, like rain
On pavements when the sky is clear,
Like isolated lines of verse
Reverberating in the mind,
Like figures in disturbing dreams
Condensed by waking to an article
Of clothes, like the loud cries
Of frogs or insects in the night
Or like the golden light of sundogs
Through a rift of cloud, like memories
Of wordless lies, like flies that buzz
About an opened fruit, like clothing
Folded in a drawer or like a pain
That vanishes as soon as felt,
Like butter melting in a bowl
Or like the color of a shoal of sand
As waves wash over it, like salamanders
Scurrying from walls, like postcards
Of suburban shopping malls,
Like scores of games with pencilled names
Of friends forgotten long ago or like
A song dissolving in an empty room
While in the street below imported saplings
Glitter in the passing lights of cars.

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A CONCISE HISTORY OF MUSIC

When the wells of song were sweet
In the childhood of the world
And tambourines jingled and bagpipes skirled
And drums would beat with the beat
Of the heart, there was no art that hands and feet
Didn't perfectly understand.
And wasn't life grand?
Oh, life was grand.

But the wells of song grew foul,
And no one who heard them knew why
The hautboy would scream like a jet in the sky
And viols would seem to howl
And the harpstring's sound was the cry of an owl.
No, no one understood
How songs so lovely could
Cease to be good.

Michael Malinowitz

CLOUDS

line up
one on one as jokers
scratch the clouds
gape against the dunes
where sea glass reoccurred
illuminating unmade love in conversations
with marilyn on fire island
the part one bathes
so to despair of her activity

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David Lehman

THE LAST LAUGH

"I wouldn't sleep with you if you were the last man on earth." How often have we all been the targets of remarks as tiresome and unfeeling as this! Yet, upon closer inspection, we may well be wrong to feel insulted or rejected. It occurs to me that when one sleeps with a woman it is contingent upon knowing that there are indeed many other potential lovers to be found in the world. If any one of them were by some chance to become the last and only woman on earth, would one not feel tempted to decline?

Rachel Hadas

HILL

Uh-huh, you married a bundle of troubles.
Here on the hill wind whooshes around me,
sun leans down the sky.

Limbs stretched over the canopy
earth keeps proffering generously,
I crumple up past and future.

Children's voices follow me.
I slip ahead to a stripped-down day
when I'll be nostalgic in some cafe

for this baggage body.
I'll conjure up house, brook, hill
where I once wished for an easy exile.

Unfailing gold of the past, still molten, flows.
A hawk is circling unknown carrion,
this juicy skin of sadness I take down.

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BOOKS

THE SURVIVAL OF ALLEN GINSBERG

JOURNALS: EARLY FIFTIES, EARLY SIXTIES. By Allen Ginsberg. Edited by Gordon Ball. Grove Press. $10.

AS EVER: THE COLLECTED CORRESPONDENCE OF ALLEN GINSBERG AND NEAL CASSADY. Edited by Barry Gifford. Creative Arts. $5.95.

MIND BREATHS: POEMS 1972-1977. By Allen Ginsberg. City Lights. $3.

We have three new books from Allen Ginsberg: a selection of recent poems, a second transcription of entries from his vast store of journals, and an exchange of letters with Neal Cassady, who was once the elusive object of his tumultuous affections. But there is nothing especially new here; two of the books are retrospective forays over known territory. For years Ginsberg has been the most accessible of our writers, and has conducted his affairs very much in the open, if remarkably beyond the reach of talk shows, bookchat, and general literary blather. Nor do the poems break any new ground, imaginatively or technically. They put forth the standard brew of homosexuality, metaphysics, pacifism, political outrage, muddled prophecy, and homemade Buddhism that is as familiar now as the morning coffee, and about as alarming.

Ginsberg has long since graduated from being a subterranean and "know-nothing Bohemian" to being everyone's favorite prophet. He is our anarchist-in-residence, queer and avuncular, whose tirades against imperial warfare, official repression, and hard dope, and open passion for nubile young boys are disarmed and domesticated by his irony. Even Diana Trilling, who is ever on the alert for bad influences on the young, has preferred to remember him, in *We Must March My Darlings*, as a warm and comforting presence in the sixties. As an added ingratiating feature, Ginsberg is that rarest of figures among American poets, a survivor, working vigorously into his fifties, despite the script he was handed early in life which called for a spectacular crack-up or a slow descent into alcohol or madness in the grand American tradition. He was cut out to be a *poète maudit*: a Poe, a John

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Berryman, a Delmore Schwartz, a Sylvia Plath, a Jack Kerouac or Norman Mailer (whose chief claim to attention these days is the novel he *can't* write), and much of his initial impact in the fifties came from the impression, which he cultivated, that he had privileged insight into the tragic fate of the imagination in America: "I saw the best minds of my generation destroyed by madness." But, unlike Kerouac, he eventually recoiled from the allure of self-destruction, and saved us, in the bargain, from another tiresome lesson in how America treats her poets, and yet another spellbinding case-history in poetry as a by-product of terminal euphoria. He was finally too ironic and willful for martyrdom, and, despite his rages against America and her wars, too enamored of the *idea* of America (which has been bound up for him with the idea of Walt Whitman) to renege on his initial promise: "America I'm putting my queer shoulder to the wheel."

Special credit for Ginsberg's survival must go to his Buddhism, which has taught him how to marshall and conserve his energies, and has given him the emotional ballast to stand up against crushing psychic pressures. The air of wise passiveness that attends his public appearances these days is a deliberate calm, a steady vigilance over his own seething emotions, which he has learned to hold in check and sublimate into a sonorous and agitated delivery. In a recent poem on the subject of being mugged in his own neighborhood ("Mugging," in *Mind Breaths*) Ginsberg tells of surrendering to a troop of young thugs while frantically intoning a mantra to keep his own terror and rage under control: "I went down shouting Om Ah Hūm to gangs of lovers on the stoop watching." But whatever such a containment of rage has contributed to his durability and his public figure—that is, the instructional example—it has brought little to the poetry save a treasury of liquid phrases to be sprinkled over a poem like spices over stew, for piquancy. They scan wonderfully, while lending an air of mystical illumination. Thus a few poems in *Mind Breaths* are graced with such sweet cadences as "Bom Bom! Shivaye! Ram Nam Satyahey! Om Ganipatti, Om Saraswati Hrih Sowha!" which, for most of us, might just as well be "Polly wolly doodle all the day." Yet, despite suggestions of Tagore or Lao-Tze that hang like smog over his poetry, Ginsberg has kept faith with his original mentors—Williams, Whitman, and Blake—and nothing he has done since the poems in *Kaddish* (1961) shows any advance in vision or skill.

In *Mind Breaths*, except for a strange bit of romantic allegory, "Contest of Bards," which Ginsberg himself has hailed as a visitation from the muse, but whose studied Blakeisms ("Icy intellect fir'y beauty

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wreck") sound false to an ear trained on his more colloquial, American line, most of the poems seem like refrains from prior books, and at lower levels of inspiration at that. This is Ginsberg's coolest book; its moments of agitation, at any rate, are not up to what we remember. The spontaneous composition that was a boon to earlier poetry, summoning up the rhythmic power of the long, bardic line in "Howl," "Kaddish," and "Wichita Vortex Sutra," looks more and more like a recipe for surefire inspiration: a shortcut to the poetic high. But the paraphernalia of inspiration that works so well for Ginsberg in performance—what with the harmonium and the receptivity of audiences just dying for enchantment—are no guarantee of poetry that is effective in print, especially now that Ginsberg devotes so much of his attention to pure voice and pure breath. Only his old sexual frankness still comes alive, and that because of the aggressive punch of the sexual image, rather than from any freshness of insight or depth of meaning. "Under the world there's a lot/ of ass, a lot of cunt/ a lot of mouths and cocks,/ under the world there's a lot of come, and a lot of saliva dripping into brooks" makes its point with the same aggressiveness that Ginsberg could always summon up when in a lousy mood, even if the final result here isn't very interesting.

At this stage of the game, at fifty-two, rather than try to push ahead poetically, Ginsberg has taken to doubling back upon himself, and the journals, correspondence, memoirs, and *obiter dicta* (see Gordon Ball's *Allen Verbatim*) that now crowd the market suggest that what we can look forward to at this point are neither new breakthroughs in poetry nor further refinements, but Ginsberg's efforts to clarify his image and reaffirm his claim upon a place in American cultural history. I suspect that Ginsberg understands these days that he matters less as a poet than as a figure, an exemplary life. Certainly he has become influential without being consistently great, or even consistently engaging as a writer, and most of us can count on one hand the poems that survive rereading, let alone study. As an exemplary figure, though, Ginsberg is something else again, and it is to the clarification of the example that the journals and letters are dedicated.

But in what sense is such a life admirable? Surely not in its conspicuous alienation nor the rootlessness that has made of Ginsberg a wandering Jew (or Buddhist-Jew) by default, and certainly not in the homosexuality as such, even though as a campaigner for sexual pluralism Ginsberg has been instrumental in creating the current social climate in which coming out is considered a positive personal gesture. What surely is exemplary on Ginsberg's part is the risk he has

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taken in placing his own sexual nature out in the open: proclaiming it, writing about it, worrying over it, and insisting on its right to gratification, thus keeping himself clear of the enervating compromises of closet homosexuality. Ginsberg's acceptance of his own constitution as the very condition of his life and his poetry is certainly one of the sources of his strength and durability. Blakean that he is, he has not let himself be undermined by his own repressed desires.

But Ginsberg's long involvement with mind-altering drugs is more problematic. His exalted testimonials on behalf of his pharmacological experiments gave sanction, not only to the indiscriminate use of drugs in the sixties, but to their glorification as the elixir of cosmic consciousness. Though Ginsberg has campaigned against heroin, and now writes, "Nobody saves America by sniffing cocaine," his basic line on dope, as on everything else, has been the libertarian one: *laissez faire*, and let every man find out for himself. But hallucinogenic drugs once meant more to him than just another degree of human freedom; they conveniently suited his romance with madness, which, as Kerouac shrewdly saw, served his need to justify his mother. Though he eventually outgrew his illusions about redemptive insanity and took up spiritual self-discipline after the Indian trip in 1962-63, he had already contributed enormously and disastrously to the myth of the madman as antinomian saint "who drove crosscountry seventytwo hours to find out if I had a vision or you had a vision or he had a vision to find out eternity." Some of those visions, we now know, were the mental image of neurons boiling away in the skull. The dope revolution blew minds as the price of expanding consciousness, and whether the benefits were worth the costs, which are still being toted up in mental hospitals across the country, is largely a question of how one came through the experience.

Yet all this in Ginsberg: the aggressive homosexuality, the rootlessness, the anarchism, the celebrated expeditions in search of a better hallucinogen, cannot be seen apart from what is exemplary in him, for they are, however ambiguous, his efforts at salvation. They are what he had to attain and then had to get beyond. The accumulating documentation of his life is slowly amounting to the authentication of a saint's life, a history of beatitude whose theme, like that of all saints' lives, is crisis, conversion, and trial. The famous Blake vision, of which we have a half dozen accounts, is like Paul's vision on the road to Damascus or Martin Luther's fit in the choir, a token of election, and the torments that follow are steps in the realization of the mission. The mother's madness had to be suffered and purged; the humiliating love

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for Neal Cassady had to be indulged and worked through; imprisonment and institutionalization had to be endured and made use of; shame and guilt had to be embraced and transcended. Such experience was an apprenticeship in failure, and in light of the dismal lessons with which he was imbued, Ginsberg's heroism lies not in his oversold resistance to political power or social convention but in his refusal of the original emotional ground rules of his life. He altered the deadly prognosis: by way of Blake and Buddhism he became that mythic American, the self-made man, an anarchist Horatio Alger. More bookish, more assiduously literary than the other Beats, he rescued himself through his reading. Little wonder that he is honored these days in the academy, to whose basic values he is seemingly so anathema, for he is a living defense of the literary life, a man who was saved by books.

These journals and letters, by and large, have little to teach about Ginsberg's survival, but much to show us about his early desperation. The *Journals* cover two periods, 1952 to 1956, and 1959 to February 1962, the eve of Ginsberg's departure for India. The *Indian Journals*, which were the first to be published (1970), take up where these leave off. The correspondence with Neal Cassady extends farther back, to 1947 and the dark years at Columbia, and plots the vicissitudes of that difficult relationship into 1963. The Ginsberg who emerges from these pages is the lost and driven young poet seeking resolution of his conflicts through determined reading, mysticism, and the pursuit of sexual experience.

The letters to Neal, especially the very earliest ones, are the most moving and readable of these documents. Ginsberg's mysticism would later throw a haze of metaphysics over the emotions, and parts of the journals make for very tough going. But the letters are direct and ardent, if confused, full of passionate declarations of emotional dependency and pleas for punishment and love. Writing in 1947, a year after they had first met in New York, Ginsberg declared, "I am lonely, Neal, alone, and always I am frightened. I need someone to love me and kiss me & sleep with me; I am only a child and have the mind of a child. I have been miserable without you because I had depended on you to take care of me for love of me, and now that you have altogether rejected me, what can I do, what can I do?" I scarcely know of more abject appeals for love anywhere in literature or published correspondence. Yet even at his most desolate, Ginsberg would turn his sexual dependency into intellectual advantage, urging Neal, in a postscript to one letter, to read *Nightwood*, *Wings of the Dove*, and *The Idiot*.

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Cassady, who had been educated on Denver's skid row, where he earned an advanced degree in brutality and deprivation, was vulnerable to learning, and Ginsberg knew how to gain leverage over him with demonstrations of Columbia erudition. The letters reveal the emotional quid pro quo of homosexuality, the give and take of power that became for Ginsberg the very principle of psychic accounting, by which his paranoia and sense of persecution could give way to prophetic exaltation. His later messianism came out of his early masochism, his transcendence out of his lessons in abasement. But in their relationship Ginsberg was always the pursuer and Cassady the pursued. Cassady was, after all, married during most of this period, three times, in fact, and always seemed to have a woman in tow.

It is easy to understand the appeal of Cassady for someone like Ginsberg, though Cassady's magic does not come through in the letters. He was not an intellectual or even a reader; he tried to write and, for the most part, failed, and even his letters are garbled. "I hate words," he confessed to Ginsberg. "They are too much." Even then, some of the autobiographical fragments collected in his sole book, *The First Third,* are fascinating for the life they describe. What captivated Ginsberg and Kerouac was the rough and ready masculinity, the pose of complete male competence. They were Reichians, and he was their man of raw libido, at ease with his sexual urges, undisturbed by homosexuality though a success with women, and untempted by the appeals of comfort and responsibility. Also, he was almost a dead ringer for Kerouac, which surely played into the latter's exalted conception of him. Kerouac turned him into a myth through the superhuman figures of Dean Moriarty and Cody Pomeray; Gary Snyder saw him as the last cowboy, a Jedediah Smith entrapped by the encircling modern world; Ginsberg just loved him. He was their link to frontier manhood, their own hotrod buckaroo, though they understood too that his skid row disorientation was an alienation not unlike their own. He was born to lose. After his marriage to his second wife, Carolyn, in 1949, he wrote to Ginsberg, "From what I can understand of them your doldrums are fine. All I can see is the long, continuous doldrum I'm in." By means of fast cars, fast living, and women, he was always in flight from the doldrums, and, thanks to Kerouac, his frenetic journeying became his contribution to literature. He introduced Kerouac to an authentic American high, the high of the open road, the ecstatic illusion of omnipotence one gets during an all-night drive across the endless plains, with the radio tuned in to half the country. The rolling cadenzas of *On the Road* owe everything to

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Cassady and his cars, as do the rhythm and flow of Ginsberg's highway poems, which are among his best: "The Green Automobile" (*Reality Sandwiches*), which is a poem about Cassady, "Wichita Vortex Sutra" (*Planet News*), and the cross-country "vortex" poems in *The Fall of America*.

But the open road is only a high between starting point and destination, and in fleeing from oneself one never gets more than a few miles ahead. Cassady's urgent activity was only to buy time away from his confusion and congenital bad luck. Indeed, while Burroughs and Lucien Carr could get away with, literally, murder, Cassady would eventually get caught for possession and sale of marijuana, and wind up doing two years at San Quentin, from 1958 to 1960. After his release he was reduced to doing his routine in caricature, driving the bus for Ken Kesey and his Merry Pranksters, hitting the road as a comic imitation of himself. In 1967 he drifted down to Mexico, where he died, in February 1968, apparently from a fatal mixture of alcohol and barbiturates.

But Ginsberg and Cassady had already begun to drift apart after their reunion in 1954. Ginsberg met Peter Orlovsky, while Cassady tried to attend to his family and his job as a railroad brakeman for the Southern Pacific. In the mid-fifties, Ginsberg was also discovering his own strength and direction, consigning his torments to his poetry and spiritualizing his emotions. The movement of the journals is away from the lucid, personal, and tormented style of the early letters toward an elliptical and mystagogic style that is difficult to penetrate. Relationships fade and are replaced by casual impressions and dreams; almost half the contents of these journals are Ginsberg's transcriptions of his own dreams, though without the associations that might make them available to the average reader. Indeed, there is a refractory quality to these journals, and the *Indian Journals* are the most resistant of them all. Despite their assiduous documentation of the inner life, they obscure personal qualities in a blizzard of fragmentary notations. The disturbing aspect of these journals is the absence of any familiar ground of "sensibility" or sustained thought between pure notation and pure desire, unless the metaphysics, which is applied with such assurance, qualifies as thought. Ginsberg's imagination shuttles back and forth between observation and longing, while social relations and social thinking are consigned to the background. Consider, for example, how important Peter Orlovsky has been in Ginsberg's life and yet how strangely little we learn about him in any of these journals. But then the journals have little to say about anyone with whom Ginsberg

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has been deeply involved. The metaphysical crowds out the social and eventually even the personal, just as dream transcription supercedes conversation. The journals document the victory of the religious imagination over the social.

The appeal of Ginsberg in the sixties lay in the appearance he gave of seeing through or around or beyond the veils and corruptions of ordinary social thought. It was not then evident, as it now is, that such transcendence was in fact a falling short of social reality, and that what seemed in the poetry a deeper penetration into the mysteries of being was really a narrowing of emotional range and a painful shyness about people. We expect poetry that is sufficiently inspired to leap from one plane of meaning to another, to zoom upward from sensory data to the higher realms, but what seems like thrilling prophecy when spoken in Biblical accents does not satisfy in the form of a journal entry. Which is another way of saying that the journals and most of the letters to Neal are intrinsically uninteresting except for the light they shed on other things that may matter to us: Ginsberg's poetry, or American social history in the postwar decades.

So, I must cast my praise of these books in somewhat negative terms. There is no reason for Ginsberg not to have published such journals and letters, nor to withhold the additional materials which will soon be forthcoming. Public self-examination of this sort is a rare and valuable gesture, even when, as in this case, the social value of the gesture far exceeds the intellectual impact of what is actually disclosed. Understandably, a confession, even to oneself, is a bargain struck with the superego to permit some more difficult and compromising knowledge to be withheld, though it is odd to find such a case in which primal fears and sexual anxieties are laid bare and social relations suppressed. But that reversal is part of the antinomian meaning of Ginsberg's life. He has always done things differently than the rest of us.

MARK SHECHNER

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THE ECONOMY AND THE ECONOMIST

THE TWILIGHT OF CAPITALISM. By Michael Harrington. Simon & Schuster. $10.95.

ECONOMISTS AT BAY. By Robert Lekachman. McGraw-Hill. $8.95.

THE UNSEEN REVOLUTION. By Peter Drucker. Harper & Row. $8.95.

The economic high hope of the postwar period and especially, in the United States, of the early 1960's has turned to gloom. After the stagnation of the 1930's, the period 1950–1966 was a period which combined reasonably high levels of employment with steady growth. The countries of Western Europe indeed came to this good state earlier and more thoroughly than the United States, and Japan did still better. Yet two years ago 10 percent of the United States labor force was unemployed, contributing neither to its own support nor to the goods and services desired and even needed by the population at large. Our total output of goods and services ceased to grow at all; and shortages of energy, actual and feared, changed expectations for the future.

Nor was the United States alone, as indeed it could not be in a highly interdependent world. Growth ground to a halt everywhere in the capitalist world, even, though briefly, in ebullient Japan. Unemployment, much lower in Europe than in the United States, rose from a low level of 1 percent to a current high of 6 percent in the United Kingdom.

Finally, inflation, traditionally associated only with the poorly managed economies of Latin America or with war or immediate postwar periods, appeared in the most sophisticated and prudently managed economies, reaching peak annual rates of 14 percent in the United States and no less than 36 percent among the staid British.

No wonder there is a revival of belief that capitalism has not long to live. Not that such predictions have ever been absent, certainly not since the *Communist Manifesto*. The period 1950–1965, which may now appear as a golden age, did not appear so happy at the time. Advanced thinkers alternated among existential pessimism, condemnation of excessive conformism and the powers of organization over the

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helpless individual, and criticism of the inequalities of class and (in the United States) race that were so intrinsic to the system. Though mass opinion in the United States was favorable to the economic system, it is remarkable that throughout the greatest prosperity the workers of France and Italy have ever known, the majority of them showed their rejection by voting Communist, even when the evils of the Soviet regime were being made clear by Khrushchev's revelations and by the behavior of the regime in Hungary in 1956 and in Czechoslovakia in 1968. Even the Labor party of Great Britain has shown its steady anticapitalist views; and Sweden, as successful as any country in Europe, remained until recently under Socialist leadership, albeit a rather pragmatic one.

Above and beyond these cultural and social factors were two still more dominant features of the world polity and economy: the existence of a rival economic and political system, under which one third of the world's population operated, and the decline of imperialism, with the concomitant emergence of new nations. The first had two aspects: it showed the reality, good and bad, of the alternative socialist system which had been the ideal of most anticapitalist feeling in the advanced capitalist nations, and the political rivalry produced a development of great military and political power, exacerbated by a military technology whose destructive powers far exceeded any hitherto known. At the height of the Cold War, the very high growth rates of the Soviet Union and such evidences of technological progress as Sputnik and arms development created strong impressions of fear in this country at the Soviet strength, of admiration elsewhere and especially in the Third World, as example to be followed. Slackening of Soviet growth, stagnation in some of the satellites, and the general revulsion against the Soviet political system have virtually erased these impressions. Indeed, the reaction may have gone too far. As in the 1930's, the steady growth of the Soviet economy at about 4 percent a year, unaffected by business cycle or oil crisis, contrasts sharply with the feverish Western economy.

The emergence of the Third World has been less important so far, but has had one major impact on the economy: the cartelization of oil, which, at least in the short run, has had much to do with economic retardation in advanced capitalism.

To conclude our little bit of current history, it should be added that there has after all been some improvement in the economy. Inflation has dropped below 10 percent virtually everywhere. In Japan and the United States, economic growth has been renewed, if less

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ebulliently than in the past. However, unemployment in the United States still hovers around the 7 percent mark and shows no tendency to decrease; and Europe still displays low growth and unemployment high by its standards. In short, there may be no crisis in the old medical sense of the word, but surely there is room for improvement and for better understanding and policy.

The economist's social role is supposed to be to explain what is happening in the economy, predict what will happen, and give advice for policies which will change what is happening, presumably for the better. The problems of economics can be classified under three headings: economic stability, efficient resource allocation, and distribution, though of course these three have many points of interaction and overlap. By economic stability, I mean the problems associated with unemployment and inflation, with maintaining the utilization of labor and other resources at a high level, and keeping prices fairly steady. Efficient resource allocation is designed to insure that the resources that are used are used most productively, taking account of all social and private uses; in particular, this includes an appropriate growth policy, balancing present against future needs. The problems of distribution are those of increasing the income of some groups and decreasing that of others on the basis of poverty, age, occupation or other criteria.

In the postwar period, economists took an increasingly more prominent role in policy formation; the Council of Economic Advisers was an institutional recognition in the United States. Economists have not failed to take some credit for the successful performance of the economy in the period 1963–1966, and so it is to be expected that the failures of the economy will be blamed on them today. More than that, there has been a perception among economists that their knowledge and ability to predict and to control is vastly greater than it was before World War II. There are several reasons for this confidence. One is the transformation in the analysis of economic stability associated with the name of Keynes; in its simplest form, it seemed to give a remarkable understanding of deficient demand as a cause for unemployment and therefore yield both a predictive device and a means of developing suitable policy. A second reason for confidence is a great development in both the range and the systematization of economic data, the best example being the national income (gross national product) data. (Incidentally, the introduction of national income accounting as a systematic procedure is not due to Keynes, as both Harrington and Lekachman imply.) A third was a major development of statistical

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methodology and of its application on a massive scale, starting with the prewar work of Ragnar Frisch and Jan Tinbergen (for which they received the first award of the Nobel Memorial prize in Economic Science when it was instituted) and continuing with that of Lawrence Klein, current president of the American Economic Association, and many others.

A second development, more continuous with past economic doctrines though not with past economic policy, has been the use of economic criteria for decision-making, what are usually called "cost-benefit" or "cost-effectiveness" criteria. For example, in deciding whether or not to proceed with an irrigation project, the benefits and the costs should be computed and the project approved only if benefits exceed costs. It should be emphasized that the benefits and costs are not confined to those realizable on the market but should encompass the full social range: for example, environmental concerns, effects on soil erosion and the water table, or changes in the likelihood of floods. The difficulties in understanding and measuring the full range of social consequences are indeed considerable, not to say overwhelming; while progress has been made, no one working in the field will deny that much remains to be understood and to be measured and indeed that there will always remain unmeasurable elements in the economic calculus of any significant policy decision.

Three more brief remarks before I turn to the books under review:

(1) Economists were by no means uniformly confident that Keynes and econometrics had together solved the problems of economic stability. The monetarist school of Milton Friedman denied the validity of the simpler Keynesian models and took a much more modest view of the possibilities of intervention; Marxists, such as Paul Baran and Paul Sweezy, though accepting much of Keynesian theory, held that the policies needed to achieve economic stability were not politically possible in a capitalist system; economists who studied the labor market and the special problems of the very poor held that global stimulative policies would run up against structural obstacles, and even convinced Keynesians were worried about the possible inflationary dangers of maintaining full employment by government spending.

(2) No one who has been involved in policy formation would agree that actual policy has followed the advice of economists. This is particularly true with regard to resource allocation policy; one would be hard put to find a significant decision in which a benefit-cost analysis has played more than a marginal role. Even with regard to economic stabilization policy, it is easy to point to decisive cases where

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the advice of economists has been disregarded, notably on raising taxes to meet the increased demands occasioned by the Vietnam War. It may be true, as Keynes asserts to Lekachman's applause, that "the ideas of economists and practical philosophers . . . are more powerful than is commonly understood. Indeed the world is ruled by little else"; but, as Keynes adds, "not indeed immediately, but after a certain interval." It certainly must be true that the general Keynesian thesis, that government action in the form of an unbalanced budget can offset a tendency to unemployment, has crept into the popular and political belief system; and, analogously with regard to resource allocation, the idea that the costs of a government policy ought to bear some relation to the benefits must have had some restraining influence on some government programs.

(3) The role of power in the economic system has been a prevailing difficulty. We must distinguish between *political* and *economic* power in the economy. The mainstream of economic thought, from Adam Smith on, has tended to emphasize the importance of competition among economic units in restraining economic power; the desire for power and its exploitation for increased profits is limited, not by self-restraint, but by the greed of rivals who seek to garner some of the profits for themselves. This competition, it is traditionally argued, keeps profits at a minimum level necessary to induce the economy to operate, even though each individual entrepreneur seeks only more. The emergence of very large economic organizations, both corporations and unions, has been a recognized embarrassment, and Joan Robinson and Edward Chamberlin in the 1930's achieved some success in extending economic theory to cover some elements of monopoly power.

The effect of political power on the economy has long been recognized; taxes, tariffs, regulation of industry, and monetary policy have long been studied, and, more recently, government spending. The stance of the economist is either that of the detached observer, predicting the effect of actual policy, or the expert adviser, predicting the consequences for each policy so that they may be evaluated comparatively. However, the causes of state action have not been the concern of the economist, nor are they matters to which his usual tools have been much suited. Marxists have always emphasized the connections, though the Marxian theory of the state is remarkably underdeveloped. The Chicago school has begun its theory of public intervention. Indeed, its views on the influence of vested interests on government action are remarkably close to Marxist; Gabriel Kolko's Marxist

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analysis of the beginnings of railway regulation in the United States, which he explained as the formation of a railroad cartel, was warmly applauded in reviews by the *laissez-faire* advocates.

So we have a historical conjunction—a falling-off from a period of apparent great economic success, a failure of professional economics to predict or prescribe and to analyze the political factors which supervened in the economy, and a long-standing current of dissatisfaction with the capitalist system, reinforced by the spreading presence of an actual rival. The books of Harrington and Lekachman directly arise from this triple intersection, that of Drucker more tangentially.

Harrington's work is a deeply felt, carefully thought out, awkwardly expressed argument that Marx's analysis of capitalism is still of great value and in fact supplies the key to understanding the present situation. The presentation is in many ways characteristic of Marxian theoretical writing: citations and content analysis of the Master, great learning in the writings of other Marxists as well as of contemporary economists and sociologists, a citation of current economic facts and political tendencies. The manner is, however, uncharacteristically cheerful and devoid of spiteful polemics.

Indeed, Harrington is almost ecumenical among Marxist sects and rival viewpoints, Stalinism and the bureaucratic collectivism of the Soviet Union alone falling outside the pale. He displays understanding and appreciation of most of the current Marxist writers; I doubt if the word "brilliant" has ever been used so often in a book not dealing with diamond cutting. Even when he disagrees, most notably with the French Marxist, Louis Althusser, there is a tone of respect and a willingness to learn.

It is, I suppose, intrinsic to the very philosophy of Marxism that works of Marxist analysis frequently tend themselves to be political acts. It is not hard to see reflections of the current political situation on the Left and of Michael Harrington's own role. The Cold War forced the democratic socialist movement into an uncompromising anti-Stalinist position; independent Marxist thinking, crushed by Stalin and his henchmen, could only survive by accepting an anti-Stanlinist orthodoxy. I accept the possibility that this rigidity may have been historically necessary at a certain moment; but orthodoxy does not promote progress in social thought. In the United States, this rigid reaction led to support of the Vietnam War by the official leadership of what was left of the socialist movement.

The New Left in this country and elsewhere and, in Europe, some element of freedom among the Old Left induced by its greater strength

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and self-confidence there began to develop new, untrammelled and sometimes even creative social analysis from a Marxist viewpoint. In the turmoil of the late 1960's, this thinking, with its emphasis on the humanistic side of Marx, was sometimes allied to elitist conspiratorial attitudes. Though Stalinism was certainly repudiated, the ideal still seemed to be the Bolshevik side of Lenin before the days of power, with Mao Tse-Tung as his present avatar. But the end of the days in which the revolutionary Parousia seemed to be at hand has left a legacy of thought which and a body of intellectuals who can now perhaps be directed toward electoral politics.

A Marxian analysis which will achieve these ends must show first of all the compatibility of Marxism with democratic politics, second, the fruitfulness of reformist policies within a basic commitment to the end of capitalism, and third, a willingness to enter into a dialogue with present-day Marxist thinkers without insisting on a past impeccably devoted to the ballot box as the sole instrument of change. Harrington's book flows naturally from this historic condition and in addition seeks to vindicate Marx against current detractors and to show the fruitfulness of Marxian analysis for an understanding of the current economic situation.

Let me make clear that I am not for a moment suggesting that Harrington is in any way deliberately adjusting his analysis for political success. His sincerity is beyond doubt; but clearly understanding of and action in the current conjuncture are seen together.

The book is divided into two parts; the first seeks to interpret Marx correctly and appropriately, the second to apply Marxist analysis to the current economic and political situation.

The first part is largely devoted to critical analysis of Marx's words and actions and to the comments of others on them. The theme, if I may desperately simplify, is that the model of society envisaged by Marx is much less rigid than usually contemplated. The "superstructure" is not strictly determined by the economic base, and, indeed, it is precisely the contradictions which impel the course of social change. Consciousness of the social structure comes neither from disembodied intellectual thought nor mechanically from economic conditions but interacts dialectically with them.

As part of his theme, Harrington denies the contradiction between the humanist Marx of the 1844 manuscripts and the scientific Marx of *Capital*. The latter was simply examining in great detail the economic basis for the alienation of human labor in the capitalist system; but the aim is still the achievement of the unified man.

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I am no scholar of the Marxian corpus and cannot evaluate the extent to which Harrington represents correctly Marx's views. I will simply say that I found the whole section of great interest, full of side comments which do not lend themselves to easy summary. Let me concentrate rather on the chapter on Marx's economics (entitled "The Anti-Economist").

There is an excellent summary of Marx's view of capitalism (pp. 95–99). First of all, goods are commodities, i.e., produced for sale and not for use. But especially important is that labor power is sold by the worker to the capitalist. It follows that production within the firm, controlled by a single profit-maximizing capitalist, is highly rational; but the system as a whole has no plan and is anarchic and inefficient. In particular, production is diverted to anti-social ends (e.g., luxury industries) not because of malice but because this direction corresponds to maximization of profit, and the entrepreneur who would do otherwise would be driven out of existence. The profit of the capitalist derives from withholding some part of the product of labor. The value of a product is measured, according to Marx, by the amount of labor embodied in its production (including the amount of labor embodied in the raw materials and capital used up in the process); but the laborer is paid only a lesser amount for his labor power.

However, this withholding of surplus value by the capitalist is concealed by the nature of the system, since the worker enters into a voluntary contract. In feudalism, on the contrary, the worker's provision of labor to the lord is explicit and open. Hence, the capitalist system, it is asserted, mystifies the relations of exploitation, a point excellently discussed in Chapter 5.

The present mainstream of economic thought, the so-called neoclassical school, has a criticism of this viewpoint. It is the factor of competition. If hiring labor yields a surplus value, why do capitalists not compete among themselves for labor? A given capitalist will wish to raise wages slightly, drawing labor away from others and thereby receiving surplus value from more workers. This process will continue until there is no more surplus value, or at least until the rate of profit falls to the point where capitalists no longer wish to accumulate more capital or even hold on to the capital they have. (The so-called "transformation problem" exemplifies this issue but is not necessary to its statement.) To be sure, Marx and Harrington are not unaware of this point. They argue that, as the profit rate falls, there will be a crisis, and resulting unemployment, which will relieve the pressure on wages; also, high wages will induce innovations and substitution of capital

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for labor, thereby reducing the need for labor. But these arguments are no longer distinctively Marxian.

There is a still more fundamental question. The essence of the neoclassical value theory is that values are determined by an interaction of desires or tastes with scarcities. Of course, a commodity which takes much labor will be expensive because it uses up so much of a scarce resource. But labor is not the only scarce resource. Diamonds, to use the old cliché, command value, not because they require much effort to find but because they are so few. One could multiply examples, but the most important question is the value of labor power. In Marxian theory, surplus value arises because the value of labor power is less than the value of the goods produced by it. Why is this so? In *Capital*, the answer seems clear: the value of labor power, like that of any other commodity, equals the value of the labor needed to produce it. If this means anything at all, this means that wages are at a subsistence level. Harrington is at great pains to deny this proposition, and indeed he can produce texts to support his interpretation. But, then, what replaces the subsistence theory? The neoclassical viewpoint says, in effect, that wages are determined by the scarcity of labor. Marx would appear to have no particular theory, except to say that they go up and down with the business cycle and possibly that they are affected by bargaining and union pressures.

I do not come to defend the neoclassical theory; it does not explain unemployment and it cannot do much with the patent fact that competition is limited in intensity. But I do not feel that the deficiencies of neoclassical economics as an explanation and predictor of the economy are particularly well met by Marx's theories. Nor, though I do not want to enter a complex matter here, do I think the neo-Ricardian theories of Piere Sraffa and Joan Robinson particularly helpful. In fact, despite Harrington's "War of the Two Cambridges," (in the United States and the United Kingdom, thought of as exemplifying neoclassical and neo-Ricardian thinking, respectively), I regard the neo-Ricardian viewpoint as hard to distinguish from the neoclassical.

As Harrington has stressed, the value of Marxian analysis is not so much to arrive at a mechanism for prediction as to understand "the pervasive light, the special atmosphere" of the times. The role of power and particularly of economic power in the running of the state and the operations of the economy is probably the point to which Marxian analysis is most useful in directing attention (though it must be recognized that conservatives are very good at recognizing power), as Peter Drucker's book brings out). But the price of flexibility is vague-

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ness. Harrington's statement of the "Marxian paradigm" in Chapter 7 does not have much cutting power.

The more specific analyses of the current situation in the second part of the book are more valuable as criticisms than as positive contributions to understanding. It is not that there are not many good pieces of analysis. That the welfare state is a continuation of capitalism and not a new society, that the claims of those who see postindustrial society as a remarkable revolution are exaggerated are well argued. Harrington sees the effects of the new interventions for economic stability as continuing the old views that business determines the priorities of society. He does, again, not allow for the effects of competition in at least somewhat shaping the economy's priorities towards the public's needs. The highway subsidies are trotted out again; but they are in fact paid for by gasoline taxes, and have in fact responded to the needs and desires of the public. The recent experiences with public rapid transit, say in San Francisco, do not suggest that the public really wants such a system, even though the subsidies make federal highway expenditures minuscule by comparison. The bankruptcy of the cities may reflect a poor choice of priorities by them. As for health care, one would be hard put to defend the proposition that insufficient resources are being put into that area; even the distribution of the system's benefits has been greatly equalized by the welfare state, through Medicare and Medicaid.

Harrington is usually very fair in his implications; only once did I detect what I would regard as a misleading use of data. He notes (p. 233) that the proportion of tax reductions (in the period 1964–1973) going to the poor was less than the proportion of tax returns (and *vice versa*) at the opposite end of the scale. This means that the *dollar amounts* of tax reduction were lower at the low end than the upper. But a little arithmetic will show that the *proportionate reductions* were much greater. I don't think the phrase "pampering the rich and slighting the poor" is a complete characterization.

A chapter is devoted to the oil crisis. But, like many Marxian analyses of current events, it comes down to an exposé of the effect of powerful oil companies on the government, both in tax benefits for drilling abroad and in import quotas. The story warrants retelling, for it is ugly, and it is a manifestation of the interaction between capitalism and the government—one very likely unavoidable as long as capitalism exists. Unfortunately, I am not at all convinced that it has much to do with the current critical situation. That has to do with a growth in demand for oil on one hand and an awareness of their monopoly power by OPEC on the other. If we had followed the best

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socialist policies before 1973, I doubt that the present problem in the United States would be more than marginally improved. Ultimately, oil will run out, though we don't know how soon, and we have to adjust to that. This is a technological and geological fact, and it is hard to see that much could be done to prevent it.

A good critique of the neoconservative position (although I have some reservations about some points) in Chapter 11 is followed by a very subtle Chapter 12, in which dialetical arguments really show their power. The welfare state is seen as an expression of power by the lower classes, and of middle-class conscience, in addition to being a preventive measure by the capitalists. Fighting for reforms is not simply cooptation; it actually changes the system and the resulting contradictions move it in the direction of still further change.

Harrington's book is well worth reading. It defies easy summary, because many of its most illuminating remarks are made incidentally. It is more a development of a point of view than a genuine theory.

I find Lekachman's book much less interesting, even though my list of disagreements would be much shorter and even though his style is much more graceful and more witty. (These are very atypical adjectives to apply to an economist's writings; indeed, it would be judged *a priori* incredible that out of three books written by authors of reputation the one by an economist would be the best written.) One reason why my disagreement would be limited is that in fact much less is asserted than seems to be. It is certainly claimed that modern economics is virtually useless, but the charges lack specificity and depth. He virtually never quotes doctrines of particular economists which he regards as wrong and is silent on many of the issues which rend the science (or if that honorific term is inadmissible, the profession). He is a great admirer of Keynes; most of postwar economics has been the working out of Keynes's theories, yet somehow the result is very disappointing to Lekachman (and indeed to most of us). What has gone wrong? Lekachman does not enlighten us.

What does he say? Economists have predicted badly; economic policy has been hampered by a fear of offending corporations, particularly in regard to price controls but also oil policy; economics does not understand or take account of power relations, hence did not predict the oil crisis, and also cannot take account of either corporations or labor unions; the training of economists is directed towards the use of the market as a tool of policy and as a measuring rod, and this is the basis of their incapacities; economic policy requires moral vision as well as (in fact instead of) technical manipulation if it is to be useful.

There is little in this list that I would disagree with, and I suspect

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most of my colleagues would have the same attitude. The main questions are still unanswered. How significant are the limitations of economics for the purpose at hand? What are the countervailing arguments which have motivated economists to continue in their erring paths? Above all, what is the presumably better alternative path we should have followed?

Lekachman periodically decries the presence of unemployment, arguing, as most economists have done for the last twenty-five years, that it is a scandal in the presence of so many unmet needs. But, as Lekachman says, "many liberal economists have been reluctant to press [full employment] because of fancied inflation trade-offs." But are the trade-offs "fancied"? Elsewhere, the author notes that at full employment, "the wage structure shifts upward [and] prices will surely rise at accelerating rates unless controls are imposed on prices and profits."

For all his appearance of dissidence, Lekachman thus accepts the common (though, to my mind, unproven) wisdom of the day that, in the absence of controls, full employment is incompatible with price stability. He does not seriously discuss the widespread view that price controls over an extended period produce considerable inefficiencies in the economy without in fact retarding inflation. This proposition is certainly not indisputable, but there are reasons in both theory and European practice to take it seriously.

In what is probably the central chapter, that on "the socialization of economists," he indeed argues that an excessive reliance on markets is one of the professional handicaps of the economists. On the same basis, he attacks the use of national income as a criterion for economic policy and benefit-cost analysis as a tool. The lay reader may not be aware that every criticism of the national income concept, such as the famous example that national income will fall if a man marries his housekeeper, has been recognized by those developing the national income concept. They nevertheless feel that the measure is a very useful one, and the criticisms merely serve as qualifications. (Lekachman adds, fashionably, that the national income concept is a "male invention.") In his zeal, the author even commits a fallacy or two: "If the country goes prohibitionist, GNP will decline both because the distilleries go broke and because the medical costs of alcoholism shrink toward invisibility." Unless the capital and labor in the distilling and medical industries becomes idle, for which there is no reason, this is simply false; politically, I would have thought the author would be a little more cautious in linking his viewpoint with one of the more bitterly-resented interferences with freedom in United States history.

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One of the author's cavils at both the market and its public surrogate, benefit-cost analysis, is that they are apparently neutral mechanisms for solving moral problems. "When communal values conflict, healthy societies debate them until a reasonable range of institutional compromises evolves from the contest of ideologies and interests. Less healthy societies do their best to evade discussion, preferably by the invention of some apparently neutral technical device." I doubt that this is a very useful social equivalent of a fever thermometer. But more to the point, I don't know what it really means. One way of interpreting the market as a device for allocating resources is that, when individuals desire different things, conflict is avoided by letting each choose what he wants.

Like Harrington, Lekachman emphasizes that state intervention is a creator of property and castigates economic theory for not recognizing this. Yet instead of ending up with a Chicago homily to curb the power of the state, he holds that on the whole a democratically run state is likely to create a more equal distribution of income than the market. This is not necessarily an inconsistency, but it calls for caution; perhaps all the intervention decreases the equality of income in a capitalist society.

For a final captious comment on Lekachman's book, let me deplore an occasional lapse into misleading rhetoric. To Keynes's quotation about the power ideas, referred to above, Lekachman adds his own illustrations: "Marx is better remembered than Millard Fillmore. Veblen sends clearer messages than Chester Arthur. Keynes will be remembered when Stanley Baldwin and Ramsay MacDonald are forgotten." Would these urbane sentences sound quite as impressive if Fillmore, Arthur, Baldwin and MacDonald were replaced by Abraham Lincoln, Theodore Roosevelt, Adolf Hitler and Joseph Stalin, respectively?

Lekachman's book may be of more interest to the layman, who has not heard these criticisms before, than to the economist, and my remarks may therefore be biased. It must be stressed that, with a few exceptions, the statements made are factually accurate and well documented; it is the evaluation that is in question.

Drucker's book is in a totally different spirit. Lekachman cannot complain that Drucker, a management consultant and prolific author, neglects social and political considerations. The book starts with a proposition that we needn't discuss the coming of socialism; it is already here in that pension funds are on their way to owning American business, which therefore no longer belongs to a class of capitalists. I may as well say immediately that I see no evidence for this

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statement. The few numbers Drucker presents hopelessly mix up various categories, and I think it quite clear that pension funds will never own the bulk of corporate stocks. Once that sweeping generalization is out of the way, however, Drucker makes a large number of very acute, if unsystematic, statements about the evolution of the property concept in large corporations, the effect of having a substantial proportion of investible resources limited to relatively safe forms of investment, and the aging demographic structure.

KENNETH J. ARROW

LIFE WITHOUT POETRY

THE INNERWORLD OF THE OUTERWORLD OF THE INNERWORLD. By Peter Handke. The Seabury Press. A Continuum Book. $8.95.

NONSENSE AND HAPPINESS. By Peter Handke. Urizen Books. $3.95.

Reading Peter Handke's poetry is like having a robber with a sense of slapstick tear across your mind. In no time, he ransacks language and logic and, as he races out the door, he turns, winks, and calls back, "*Now* . . . what do you think?"

Things will never be quite the same again, and even if you manage to reconstruct the familiar pieces of language, they will always show scars from the catastrophe. Of course, all poetry forces a transfigurement of the conventional contours of experience; what makes Handke's poetry unusual is that he shapes this transfigurement by using the language of logical discourse at the same time he is assaulting it. Handke beguiles the intellect only to turn it against itself. He uses

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reason to stun reasoning into bewilderment. The strength of his poetry depends upon his ability to make the reader believe that simple reasoning and a straightforward recording of the facts are all that will be needed to get the poem, but at the same time Handke is building up, playing to, this expectation, he is pulling the rug out from under it. The power of Handke's poetry surfaces at precisely the moment the reader realizes that he has been fooled, that the props of the intellect, including language itself, have been subverted.

Handke does not use symbols and, except in a few cases, he does not depend upon images and the piling up of clusters of associated sensations. Instead, he uses words almost as if they were road signs (with all the banality implied in this) which one by one he proceeds to point in contradictory directions. Taken individually, the signs seem clear:

> First, run through a cornfield.
> Then run through rows in an empty concert hall.
>
> Then, at the end of the football game, try to
> get back in the stadium through the main entrance.
>
> "Suggestions for Running Amok"

Clear enough, and with humor to boot. But in the next series the direction of the signs shifts abruptly:

> When you step out on the street are you capable of
> having only *presence of mind*?
>
> When you have stepped out on the street are you
> capable of being only *active*?
>
> Once you have reached a decision are you capable of
> reaching no *other* decision?

This switch, from commands to questions, not only alters the relationship between the "you" being addressed and the "I" who is placing the signs—for one thing, bringing them closer together—it also forces the reader to resituate himself in relationship to the poem. Though only mildly unsettling at this point, each new series that follows continues to vary the relationship between the "you" and "I" and, indirectly, to redefine the reader's presence. It is as if the furniture in a room is constantly being rearranged, constantly in upheaval, and you are being moved with it; it becomes impossible to establish a fixed perspective.

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In the next series, the "you" is once again implied, as it was in the first section, but now some one, some "you" answers the question

> Where do people gather?—People gather where other people have gathered.
>
> Where do people gather?—In front of newspapers on display.
>
> Where do people gather?—In front of traffic lights.

In this series, the same question is repeated over and over and the "you" continues to try to come up with answers; then, as if the questioner is becoming impatient, the question changes to "Where else?" "Where else?" The you who is being addressed reacts to this urgency by rattling off five answers without pausing, as if to satisfy and silence the questioner. The building tension is finally broken by a new series: two simple declarative sentences which seem to come out of nowhere: "It has begun to rain.—It's not raining hard enough yet." Who said that? The "you" who was answering the questions? The "I" who was asking them? Is that the same "I" who issued the commands in the first series? Or, is this another speaker altogether? In the series which follow to the end of the poem, the "I" and its relationship to the "you" are shifted eight more times, including two sections in which the disjunction is heightened by the use of quotation marks. This shuffling of the signs creates a state of disorientation so extreme that, finally, the credibility of the various voices of the poem becomes highly suspect and, simultaneously, the medium through which these voices have been presented, that is, language itself, is also called to question.

In the poems which follow in *The Innerworld,* Handke continues to dislodge familiar connections and to sever the tissue which binds words to their commonly prescribed meanings; he forces the reader toward a realization of how tenuous the supports of "conceptualizing" are:

> "I know that noise! Someone has just died!"
> "No, it was just a grasshopper jumping on your bed."
>
> Scarcely have I begun to open my eyes—already I begin to distinguish one thing from another.
>
> * * *
>
> Scarcely have I begun to distinghish among particulars—already I must recollect.
>
> * * *

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I have scarcely begun to speak again—already each
sentence seems like a dream of what I perceive.

"Someone has just died!"
—"Yes, but in the outlands."—
—"Something is just being turned inside out!"—
—"Yes, but in the outlands."—
—"Something is just going CRAAK!"
—"Yes, but because we can speak of it it is a dream."

"Distinctions"

In "Distinctions," as with the other poems in *The Innerworld,* the page upon which a poem appears can almost be seen as a stage, with each series in the poem coming from a different place. In other words, one is struck by a powerful spatial sense in reading these poems. In *Nonsense and Happiness,* the following collection, this spatial orientation, or disorientation, as the case may be, is much more integrated, primarily because a single "I" apparently presents each poem. However, as this "I" records the collapsing of various systems of meaning, it also bears witness to the collapse of the subjective sense that had been identified with these meanings; the encounters with nonsense are confrontations with the non-I:

This fall time passed almost without me
and my life stood as still as then
when I had felt so low
I wanted to learn to type
and waited evenings in the windowless anteroom

* * *

I was not in despair merely discontent.
I had no feeling for myself and no feeling
for anything else.

* * *

. . . I had once known how I ought to live
but now everything was forgotten.
I would not even perceive a fart
as something physical.

"Life Without Poetry"

Each of the poems in *Nonsense and Happiness* traces a tableau of disconnectedness; in each, the method of tracing, that is, writing, is

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exposed as a fabrication, creating an illusion of coherence. Because of its apparent coherence, writing, "the dream," replaces reality. Three of the four poems in *Nonsense and Happiness* end by pointing precisely toward this displacement:

> The shop girls their behinds stuck out
> in thin blouses
> ran arms clasped across the street
> Behind the frosted glass of a telephone booth
> a mother slapped her child's face
> How proud I was of writing!
>
> "Life Without Poetry"

Or:

> Self-collected at the typewriter
> I mark your officially unconfirmed INBETWEEN-TIME
> Imperturbable my words stand here
> for you
> without me
>
> "The End of Idling"

However, it is not simply the recognition of this deception, nor the ghostlike shifting of the discursive "I" that is fundamental here, but rather the emotional terror, the sense of vacuity, which the recognition of this entails. Quoting fragments from the poems does not do justice to their emotional power. Simple, deliberately flat on its surface, the language in these poems mimics the voice of reason; in fact, the apparent disinterestedness betrays a profound horror which has twisted the emotions into cathexis:

> . . . the nonsense
> finally becomes unendurable
> —because suddenly you believe you are exaggerating
> and feel in the wrong toward others
> and regard your state as just one of those states:
> as if you behaved "like a schoolboy,"
> not to be taken seriously.
> So you don't take yourself seriously in company
> but the nonsense is too real,
> and therefore unbearable.
> The face turns ugly with nonsense,
> So you sit somewhere
> and let it become night.
>
> "Nonsense and Happiness"

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Hyperconsciousness of the arbitrary way in which order is fabricated—including the arbitrariness of the "I" ("the face turns ugly with nonsense")—paralyzes the will; all action becomes grotesque, comical, unreal. But it is from this point of extreme disconnectedness that sense, in an unexpected, altered form, breaks through:

> after such long nonsense, suddenly there was so much
> of the world's abundance.
> The opposite of nonsense is not meaning—
> you just don't need meaning any more,
> don't even seek philosophical sense
> for the nonsense:
>
> "Nonsense and Happiness"

In each of the poems in *Nonsense and Happiness* a similar cycle is repeated: the recognition of an essential arbitrariness, the compulsive attempt to void it, and finally a resolution of sorts—an acceptance of nonsense and of the fact that the intellect and its vehicle, language, will continue to fabricate order. Obviously, this is not a resolution without conflict. The intensity of the conflict is heightened by the fact that it is presented by a writer who is himself caught between the need to write and an intense awareness of the nonsense of language. Handke is at his best when he writes from the pen-point center of this conflict and sticks to cool, discursive language in describing it. He is at his worst when he moves toward a more imagistic approach, as he does significantly in "The End of Idling," the last poem in *Nonsense and Happiness*. By relinquishing the distrust of language which was so pronounced in the earlier poems, Handke sacrifices the particular ambiguity which constitutes the essential power of his poetry. The tension is lost; the emotional level inflates into the ludicrous:

> Meager loneliness:
> Coldness
> Night
> Coated lips
> Downcast eyes
>
> Thinking of you
> in the drizzling gloom of the boulevards
> I feel my hands turn hot
> wanting you
> my thoughts
> scratch the clothes off your body
> to be closer to you

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But it is hard to imagine that a writer of Handke's talent cannot master this style; he is more successful with it in a few, later stanzas. The point is, would he want to? Would it serve his needs? Such a change would mean a return to a more traditional poetic style and would constitute a different shaping, a different type, of experience as well. Certainly it would be something very different from the *Weltanschauung* of "Suggestions for Running Amok":

> "In other words, you use the first frightful moment to make sure that there will be a second moment of fright, and the second frightful moment to make sure of a further moment of fright, so that you, since you yourself are free of fright, will always be one moment of fright ahead of them when they are just beginning to recover from their last frightful moment for which you were responsible, while they were still recovering from the initial moment of fright so that finally the moments of fright become legion."
>
> And how?
>
> Make short shrift. Don't fuck around. Kill 'em off.
> Finish it up. Get it over with.
> "Don't let anyone count, not even to three."
>
> And to top it all off?
> And to top it all off I spare someone to carry on the tradition.

I would rather Handke continued to explore the dramatic possibilities he plays with in this and other poems—that he let someone else carry on with traditional methods. But while we wait to see what Handke will turn to next, we can be grateful that Michael Roloff had the good sense to translate these books. For the reader, at any rate, it was a case of sense and happiness.

KATHLEEN AGENA

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CRITICS AND SCHOLARS

THE GENTLE BARBARIAN: THE LIFE AND WORK OF TURGENEV. By V.S. Pritchett. Random House. $10.00.

Scholars exist in uneasy competition with critics like V.S. Pritchett, at times tugging possessively at the same literary text. The free-lance critic addresses his readers—the book-buying, book-reading public—whom he must please; the scholars, with no one to please, address one another, their captive audience of students, and—as curators of the tradition—posterity. Pritchett himself holds some such view of their separate spheres. The university, he said after a year at Princeton, is like a busy monastery. "These academics were at prayer constantly—one praying about the 'esthetics of Conrad,' another doing 'the rhythms of Proust.'" He means, of course, to contrast his own mode of operation with their solemn absorption in small specialities. Over the years, through the medium of the quick, graceful book review, he has covered an encyclopaedic range of literary works—as the books were published, as his interest was caught, as he thought the common reader's attention could be engaged. To bypass the accumulated heaps of knowledge, the thickets of footnotes, Pritchett's "method" (he would not use the word) is to rely on the lunge of insight in order to fix, in a few vivid phrases, the essence of a writer's vision, the total statement a novel makes, or the place a work occupies in a tradition. Some academic drudge will one day add up the remarkable total of usable ideas in his vast output.

For the safe, subsidized scholar peering out of his walled enclosure, Pritchett and a few like him—Edmund Wilson, above all—have the look of critical freebooters who will dart in, take possession of, and—as it sometimes seems—ravage the scholar's sacrosanct texts. (See Wilson's assault on *Doctor Zhivago.*) But there is—indeed there has to be—a steady exchange between the two embattled parties: the critic needs some of the scholar's information if he is to operate at all, and may well make use of the fruits of a more systematic analysis than he is willing to engage in; the critic may show the scholar a new way into a work, a new set of relations within it or an unexpected connection with other texts that lie outside the scholar's necessarily narrower vision.

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(Although others have written on it since, it was Pritchett's casual essay on Goncharov's *Oblomov*, I believe, that first alerted me to the ambivalence in that work's condemnation and celebration of the notion of classical *otium* in feudal Russia.)

The Gentle Barbarian, Pritchett's new biography of Turgenev, raises a number of questions about this uneasy, if sometimes beneficial, exchange. Pritchett lacks Russian, hence access to untranslated letters, complete annotated editions, variant texts, and a vast body of native commentary; what can he tell us *without* all this scholarly equipment? Some, of course, he has at second hand, the evidence selected by the Russian-speaking academics who have preceded him. He graciously acknowledges his debt to Magarshak's and Yarmolinsky's biographies, and especially to April Fitzlyons's study of Pauline Viardot, Turgenev's lifelong love. Beyond that there are a scattering of commentaries, and selections of letters in French and English, but little else. We begin, nevertheless, with high hopes—Sir Victor will wing it—but we end with the depressing question: What went wrong? The answer is complicated, and implicates Pritchett, his publishers, and, in a certain sense, Turgenev himself.

The straight biographical matter is unexceptional, an elegant gloss, to a degree, on clumsier, though firsthand, studies. Pritchett presents his own modest commentary on the familiar material, disagreeing for example with Magarshak on the extent of Turgenev's physical involvement with Viardot. The story of his long, strange entanglement with her is freshly told thanks to new material from the Fitzlyons study. The other well-known figures, scenes, and dilemmas are all adequately there. Turgenev's awful mother, who threatens to run away with any biography of her son, shaping his life and his work till the day he died, plays her role in Pritchett's script like the old trouper she has become. The fierce and foolish quarrels with Tolstoy and Dostoevsky are retold with a proper emphasis on their comic aspects. Turgenev's complex state of suspension between literary and political factions, and his steady defense of the autonomy of art against their claims on it, are sketched in, although without enough detail to take us any great distance into Russian intellectual life. His central position as European man of letters is minimally conveyed—most of the names are given, with an anecdote or two, but little is said about what he gave to or took from the many writers and intellectuals he knew. Pritchett recently said that there was no "definitive" biography of Turgenev. This does not mean, as it might seem to, that he had meant to provide it, but, rather, that he (or the publisher) must have

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felt that there was room for yet another less-than-definitive biography—less definitive, perhaps, if there were any way to measure it, than Yarmolinsky's *Turgenev: The Man, His Life, and His Art* (1926 and 1959).

As straight recorder of the details of a life, Pritchett scores no higher, perhaps, than we should have expected him to: he is no more a researcher than Turgenev is an "inventor." It is as critic, after all—as "first reader" in Frye's phrase—that we expect him to reward us. He "reads" the major novels and many of the shorter works, but in an oddly incomplete and merely recapitulative way. We find ourselves noting lacunae instead of illuminating perceptions; we are given an incomplete and not entirely accurate portrait of Bazarov; *On the Eve* may well be one of Turgenev's weakest novels, but one wonders how this judgment can be reached without taking into account the extraordinary final episode in Venice. Repeatedly the work of fiction is reduced to a biographical datum: his mother's savagery, his father's sexual adventuring, his own passive dependency on Viardot. These observations are no doubt true, but they are neither new nor helpful, and they tell us little about Turgenev's artistic vision.

On more than one occasion we sense the lunge for insight, but the returns are disappointing. He is close to perceptiveness when he says of Turgenev that "he had the eyes of a naturalist; that is to say there is no day-dreaming in it, no Wordsworthian moral content." There *is* reverie on occasion, but Pritchett is quite right that there is no world beyond the evidence of the senses. Nature's mood is indifference, its yield enigma. But he is only half right when, in pursuit of the same point, he contrasts the "eyes" of Tolstoy and Turgenev: what Tolstoy sees in nature is still and settled for good; what Turgenev sees "is already changing." There is change in Turgenev, but it is not development; it is the random result of time's flux, without regularity, direction, or depth. Pritchett has not understood that Tolstoy's object seems vivid and permanent because, as the master of *process*, he roots it in a changing natural and metaphysical—transcendental, Wordsworthian—order, and places its perceiver (usually a major character) in an equally complex process of mental change that is simply beyond Turgenev's reach.

One minute we may think Pritchett has isolated the secret of the play of character in Turgenev: "We have the sensation of people living in and out of their changing judgment of one another, and all in a single clear stream"; a moment later we conclude that this is an imprecise way to characterize all good dramatic writing. And some-

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times he is plainly wrong: "Tolstoy was at this time (1856) an awkward and slovenly writer"—this after *Childhood, Boyhood,* and *The Sevastopol Sketches*! The yield of insight is not much richer than the retold biography.

And yet, the fault may be Turgenev's. Perhaps there are no more sparks to be struck from his work by the modern critical mind. So much of what he has seen and told is there on the surface, to be had for the taking. With no taste for theology or metaphysics, demiurges or apocalypses, this clear, sensible "realist" was above all an observer, as Pritchett emphasizes, who wanted to show Russians to themselves as they really were. We tend to see Turgenev as finishing last in two literary competitions—with his great Russian contemporaries, and with his Paris friends, Flaubert and James, the partisans of "the well-made novel." Pritchett's unrewarding survey of his achievement might persuade us to remove him forever from these unfair contests he can never win, and see him as one of the best nineteenth-century writers of the second rank. The eye was as good as any, the craft meticulous, the language graceful and expressive, but his limited reach of mind and power of invention—shortcomings Pritchett acknowledges explicitly or implicitly—confine him too often to the merely social scene. Beyond, for him, lies biological existence—above all the mystery of aging and dying—but nature has no more secrets to give up. *Fathers and Sons* might well appear on anyone's list of distinguished novels; some of his stories and tales—"Bezhin Meadow," for example—belong in all serious anthologies of short prose forms. Too modest, too civilized—the gentlest of barbarians—he cannot endure comparison with his arrogant, visionary, bear-like compatriots Tolstoy and Dostoevsky. The common reader may turn to him—as to Maupassant, Wharton, or E.M. Forster—confident of a serious experience, but the deep-reading critic or scholar may be prepared to give him up to the historians of culture who will study him as a European sensibility, close to the center of everything—as Russia's literary ambassador to the West, as a primary developer of Russian prose forms, and as an incomparably subtle observer of the Russian social, intellectual, and moral scene.

In one silly sentence, Pritchett attributes the affinity between Viardot and Turgenev to a shared "atavism": Her "Spanishness had its Islamic roots; his own, remote though they might be, had something of this too." This talk of Islamic vibrations is less interesting as a lapse from sense than as an involuntary signal of the place the book was meant to have on a scale of seriousness, as the publishers defined it. No

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footnotes or index, a rudimentary bibliography, chaos in the spelling and transliteration of Russian names heighten the impression that the book was conceived as a package of popular biography with a chance at the best-seller list. I don't mean that Pritchett has written to that formula—there is no invented dialogue, for example. The Islamic lapse is very likely his own whimsical Britishism, but he may well have felt licensed to utter it by the thinking that lay behind the book's production. This marketing decision, too, may account for the abundance of warmed-over information, and for the curbing of the kind of speculation that generates insight. The common reader, for whom the book is clearly intended, will not be cheated of the main events of Turgenev's life as man and writer; the specialist in Russian literature, on the other hand, will learn next to nothing. But the real loser is the student of other literatures; of the French novel, say, who wants to become better acquainted with Turgenev. He will discover little about the special texture of the work, and less about its contribution to the design of that unique prose instrument, the Russian novel.

It is sad indeed to see that V.S. Pritchett—so acute, so venturesome, so articulate—has agreed to write for the coffee table.

RUFUS MATHEWSON

Rufus Mathewson

1918–1978

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NO OFFENSE

EVELYN WAUGH: A BIOGRAPHY. By Christopher Sykes. Little, Brown, and Company. $12.50.

Christopher Sykes's life of Evelyn Waugh is good value for the money. The book is well produced, typography and lay-out are admirable, the index is useful. Above all, the contents make absorbing reading and the literary style is pleasantly fluent. Sykes respects the intelligence of his reader while not neglecting to supply the information the reader needs. In many ways he is peculiarly well qualified as Waugh's biographer. He knew his subject well and seems to have enjoyed many years of unbroken friendship with him. He belongs to an exclusive social circle which Waugh himself entered from a little way below, and he handles with an unerring touch the minutiae of English class-distinctions that a writer on Waugh must understand. He is an old hand at biography and gets the proportions of the book just right. He avoids repetitiousness by his knack for choosing the one telling anecdote or reminiscence which isolates a trait of character or a significant moment.

Sykes's own personality is an essential constituent of the book, since what he gives us is in fact a memoir, though it covers Waugh's whole life and includes the period before Sykes knew him. Since he is writing about a great comedian, in life as in art, the role he has chosen is that of the "straight man," and if he sounds sometimes slightly pompous—occasionally reminding us of Sir Harold Nicolson, or of Beachcomber's "Mr. Thake"—this is all the better from the aesthetic point of view. But now and then I wonder if he quite sees the joke. He tells a story of an incident towards the end of Waugh's life, when he and Waugh were attending the nuptial Mass of a friend:

> The officiating priest . . . was wearing for the occasion a magnificent old chasuble, supposedly presented by Catherine of Aragon to Westminster Abbey. At a suitable moment I mentioned these facts to Evelyn who seemed hardly to understand. At length he said: "Presented by whom to what?" I repeated what I had said and he glared intently at the exquisite embroidery for a minute or so. Then he said in a voice audible to the whole congregation: "Looks brand new to me."

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Sykes then adds gravely: "After that day it did seem to me that Evelyn had not long to live." Perhaps so, but it does seem to the reader that, even ailing in body and mind, Evelyn Waugh was always a clown.

But this is only one, and far from the best, of the many anecdotes for which, if for no other reason, Sykes's book is going to be read, or at least dipped into, for many years to come. He modestly makes no claim to have written a definitive biography. But his book is likely to remain a standard work. He was given access to the Evelyn Waugh archive in the possession of the University of Texas at Austin, and he has made extensive use of Waugh's copious correspondence with, among others, Alfred Duggan, Lady Diana Duff Cooper, Nancy Mitford, and Mrs. Ian Fleming. (His quotations from Waugh's letters whet our appetite for a *Collected Letters.*) Very properly he complied with the request of the author's widow that he should make sparing use of her husband's letters to her, most of which were love letters: the only one he quotes fully is Waugh's proposal of marriage, a remarkable and rather endearing souvenir. He has made intelligent and discriminating use of everything important, whether biographical or critical, that has been published on Waugh. Altogether he has successfully combined a labor of love with a very professional job.

The chief problem for the biographer of a writer is whether to include literary criticism or not (criticism by the biographer himself, that is; reports of what other critics said are another matter.) From what Sykes says about Waugh's own decision to exclude criticism from his life of Ronald Knox, it appears that Sykes thinks the biographer should also be a critic. But his own practice is somewhat variable. He tends to pass rather rapidly over Waugh's earlier novels, for the sensible reason that he supposes them to be so well known that summary and paraphrase would be tedious. He confines himself to a pat on the back here or a frown there. Critical judgment, if passed at all, takes the form of brief general statements. There is little or no analysis, and no attempt to recreate the atmosphere and quality of any particular work. To some extent this method of criticism comes as a relief to a reader familiar with the heavy rehashing and clumsy jargon of much academic prose—especially out of place as this would be when clamped on to so sparkling a writer. The drawback of Sykes's casual method is that his remarks come to seem rather arbitrary, as do his passing references to other authors, even when one agrees with them. Thus I happen to agree with Sykes that W.W. Jacobs was a great humorist (see Waugh's unforgettable sketch of him in *A Little Learning*), and agree with Sykes (and Waugh) that Cabell's *Jurgen* is "preposterously spurious"; while

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I disagree with the view that Lord Berners's little novels are "poor stuff" or that Childers's *The Riddle of the Sands* is "almost unreadable." But "happen to agree" or "disagree" is all that one can do, and much the same can be said of most of Sykes's discussions of Waugh's own books. Moreover his occasional fault-finding does not, I feel, correspond with the way he and most of us read and remember novels. The novels that live for us are accepted as a whole and the "faults" become merely characteristics. And at his weakest Sykes sounds like a school report. Here is a complete paragraph on *Officers and Gentlemen*:

> A fine novel, not open to criticism of essentials or essential points, with merits far outweighing blemishes.

Sykes's critique, then, is apt to have the defects as well as the virtues of the unacademic—not so much the occasional inaccuracies and misspelt names, but the vagueness and looseness of his descriptions. The chief exceptions are his comments on Waugh's travel books, where he has more to tell us than any other writer on Waugh, and his long examination of the *Sword of Honour* trilogy. Here Sykes is at his best as a critic, bringing out its way of relating fact and fiction, autobiography and fantasy, with a kind of intelligent authority that no one else has yet shown in writing of these books. He is also very sensible about possible influences or analogues—Firbank, Aldous Huxley, Max Beerbohm, Saki—making the interesting point that the work of Scott Fitzgerald, with whom Waugh is sometimes compared, was unknown to Waugh until his own style and mode had been formed. And he obviously speaks with an authority founded on his own conversations with Waugh about the extent to which this or that character had a living original. Indeed, there is perhaps a little too much of this, given that Sykes is eager to emphasize—and very rightly—that Waugh was first and foremost an artist, so that it is unwise to treat any of his books as a *roman à clef*.

On the whole, then, what we get from Sykes is the story of a writer's life, interspersed with intelligent and fairly interesting comment on his works, rather than a profound critique with biographical allusions. And this story is worth telling and is well told. That Waugh was a comic genius—perhaps, apart from P.G. Wodehouse, the outstanding English comic genius of our time—is widely recognized; and in his best work, such as *A Handful of Dust*, he related the tragic to the ridiculous in a manner wholly his own, easy to illustrate, though

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impossible to describe. Yet he has been very much disliked; and it would be easy to corroborate the unpleasant picture which those who dislike him have derived from what they have heard of the man and inferred from the work. The school bully, the sottish undergraduate, the conceited playboy and man-about-town, the middle-aged choleric snob in impossibly loud tweeds, the bigoted Roman Catholic convert of the most unreconstructed, "triumphalist" pre-Vatican II kind, the elderly paranoiac with his ghastly delusions (see *The Ordeal of Gilbert Pinfold*)—these can all be found by anyone who wants to look for them. But to take this unpleasant caricature for the totality of Evelyn Waugh invites a stronger rebuttal than "Up to a point, Lord Copper" (see *Scoop*). Sykes's comment on this is unanswerable: it is Waugh's own confessions that supply all the material for the caricature. (In this respect he is rather like Samuel Butler of *The Way of All Flesh*, a writer whom he greatly admired.) He flaunted his vices and concealed his virtues.

Waugh is not one of those authors whose hold upon readers depends on their feeling (as perhaps with E.M. Forster) that the man behind the work is "very nice." Though his faults and irrationalities have been much exaggerated—especially by himself—it cannot be said that one emerges from reading Sykes with the feeling that Evelyn Waugh was a nice man. But he was not a monster either. The conclusion I am more drawn to is that, so far from being a monster, he was in fact a *good* man—at least, a man who set himself, and more often than not lived up to, standards of conduct far higher than the ordinary "nice" man would dream of imposing on himself. Without doubt he had great psychological problems, and Sykes is right to insist on the element of cruelty in his genius. But I am convinced, contrary to what is sometimes said about him, that his religious faith was a true strength to him and saved him from the moral and physical collapse of Dylan Thomas (about whom Waugh said, with a shudder, "He's exactly what I would have been if I had not become a Catholic"). It is sad to learn from Sykes that towards the end Waugh's faith was shaken. And the story of his last years is a gloomy one, as everyone's is —Sykes quotes Waugh's aphorism from his later diaries: "All fates are 'worse than death.'"

But on the whole "the world of Evelyn Waugh," through which this excellent book takes us, is an exhilarating one. Every page reveals to us the raw material which Waugh turned into immortal farce—that farce which, unlike Wodehouse's, takes into itself pain and suffering. The whole book is implicitly a defence of what was noble and serious

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in Waugh's conservatism, and not merely the squawk of a privileged class who feel their luxuries threatened. It shows also how this conservatism provided the check upon and the condition of the destructive anarchism to which Waugh's artistic instinct, and not only his temperament, was deeply attracted. It shows the part that personal suffering (such as the breakup of his first marriage) played in the darkening and maturing of Waugh's tragicomic art, without exaggerating its biographical element—we are never allowed to forget that an artist is, among other things, an inventor, and Waugh was preeminently that. He began as a painter and draughtsman, the author of a fine study of Rossetti; he became a skilled carpenter; and to the end of his life he took legitimate pride in his literary craftsmanship. Although Sykes's own prose is not as impeccable as Waugh's—some of his paragraphs could have done with a final polish—he brings out this side of Waugh very clearly, often quoting Waugh's literary opinions, on particular authors or on writing in general, so tellingly as to make us long for an ample collection of Waugh's reviews, essays and literary journalism.

It is difficult to review a book which consists so largely of anecdotes. Here is one that is likely to become hackneyed. Graham Greene had been saying that he had had an idea for a political novel: "It will be fun to write about politics for a change, and not always about God." Sykes goes on:

Evelyn was usually very sensitive to even the mildest hint of blasphemy, but on this occasion he was unperturbed. "Oh?" he responded on his high note, "I wouldn't give up writing about God at this stage if I was you. It would be like P.G. Wodehouse dropping Jeeves half-way through the Wooster series." It was said in such a way that no offence could possibly be taken, and Graham was the first to laugh at Evelyn's ingenious comparison.

W.W. ROBSON

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FROM THE MONTREUX PALACE HOTEL

NABOKOV: HIS LIFE IN PART. By Andrew Field. The Viking Press. $15.00.

The late Vladimir Nabokov, who died just as this biography appeared, played the public role—in interviews, polemics, and prefaces—of a terrifyingly testy *maître* and slayer of fools. To think even of visiting him in his alpine fastness would seem audacious enough. To think of doing so repeatedly for the purpose of drawing out of him the story of his life, and corroborating research done elsewhere, would seem to require not audacity but a mind of impaired balance. Yet that is what Andrew Field—the author both of a long study of Nabokov's work and of the definitive bibliography—undertook to do, in the nick of time as it sadly turned out, and the resultant book is a weirdly attractive, innovative, misshapen, self-indulgent, in part vilely written, often very funny, and irresistibly fascinating study. In a blurb, Leon Edel pronounces it a work of art. Well, it is emphatically not a work of scholarship, and if it is a work of art, it is surely one diminished by the irksome blatancy with which it awards itself that status, as the biographer plays sedulous ape to his subject. Nevertheless, the reader who can appreciate an ingenious compositional trick, to be discussed below, will find it possible to savor even the apparent defects of this book and follow the absorbing story with interest and pleasure.

But why should anyone require a biography of Nabokov in the first place? There are many people who regard his own autobiography, *Speak, Memory*, as his greatest achievement in prose, surpassing even *Lolita* and *Pale Fire*. It carries the story up to the point of the author's arrival in America, and the sequel (the title of which seems to be *Speak On, Memory*) has been anticipated for some time. Why, then, some second-hand account of the life? The short answer is simply that *Speak, Memory* resembles numerous other Russian autobiographies in being for the most part about other people. We are inside the subject's head looking out, sharing his experiences, observing a vividly realized world, which appears to lack nothing but himself.

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Field's purpose is to restore the flesh and blood figure of Vladimir Nabokov to all the places and occasions through which he passed in reaching "right now" in the Montreux Palace Hotel in Montreux, Switzerland. This aim is achieved with a kind of eccentric brilliance from which nothing else in the book can really detract. I have read what seem in retrospect to be hundreds of interviews with Nabokov and, as it chanced, saw a rerun of the 1966 television interview on the very eve of receiving this book for review. Not even the latter can vie with the sense of immediacy to be gained from the pages of Field's biography.

In order to make Nabokov come alive, Field focusses on two subjects. One of them is naturally Nabokov. The other is "Andrew," who is writing Nabokov's life, who engages Nabokov and his wife in a kind of conversation that extends throughout the book, and who, in the intervals that coil about the perpetual present of this conversation, has indefatigably retraced Nabokov's footsteps from his ancestral estates in Russia, through the Tenishev School in Petersburg, through Cambridge, Berlin, Paris, New York, Stanford, the other Cambridge, Cornell, and now to Montreux, interviewed whoever once for a moment passed through the orbit of the great man, read every available bit of correspondence, every entomological article, chess problem, juvenile poem—everything. Like Field, he is an American scholar who has learned Russian, and he now teaches in Australia.

He is more than a little of a popinjay, this "Andrew," about whose name inverted commas should henceforth be imagined, and the irksome qualities of the book all derive from the imperfections of his character and background. His character, in brief, is marked by a ludicrously self-satisfied complacency, and his background by that insufficiency of education and general culture for which pompousness is commonly the mask. He is widely travelled and widely read, but much of this has been lost upon him. For one thing, his grasp of English prose is uncertain. Spelling itself is a problem. He uses British spelling whenever he can remember to do so (not always), and by way of overcompensation can occasionally be *plus britannique que la reine: telegramme*! (p. 262). The editor at Viking was, I must say, amazingly indulgent—either that, or in on the joke. Andrew can write, "his sense of measure and his *methodological* [methodical?] way of looking at things," (54), or "the reliability of the two women . . . is *vouchsafed* [confirmed?] for me," (56), or call upholstery "*ungainly* [?] and almost desiccated" (3). His incuriosity about the meaning of simple words can cause him to lurch into a kind of gratuitous illogic: "Tolstoy has

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taught us, of course, that there is no such thing as a happy family. All happy families are alike; but no two individuals, much less families, can be alike; therefore [therefore!] there are no happy families." (64). This innocent twaddle rests on the confusion of *alike* with *identical*. If no two individuals could be *alike* there would be no basis for rational thought.

On the list of Andrew's priorities, however, rational thought ranks no higher than precision of diction and syntax. He and Nabokov have discussions on the latter topic: "On the occasion of this particular discussion we instructed each other, proceeding more gingerly than testily, in the proper usage and feel of adverbs in English. I elected to be vague but firm . . ." (5). Deliciously condescending toward Vladimir Nabokov's lapses from correct English grammar, Andrew writes: "There are brilliant riders who fumble a bit getting their foot into the stirrup. *That is all there is to it.*"

Andrew, to his credit, is at some pains to state explicitly what we can see plainly enough already: that Nabokov does not altogether approve of him or his undertaking. The very opening words inform us that Nabokov dislikes even the title. (*Nabokov: His Life in Part* pointlessly echoes the 1967 work, *Nabokov: His Life in Art*.) Nabokov dislikes biographies, period, and Andrew, doing his Nabokov imitation, writes: "I do not like biographies and in past years read very few of them, though by now I can pretend to some expert knowledge of the sorry genre" (6). The Leon Edel who called this a work of art must have found his impartiality severely tried by that line. But Andrew will keep his title, of course, and explains why in a passage that exemplifies his habit of larding his text with feeble mimicry of Nabokov: "The title is an admission and declaration of inconclusive evidence [the original title of Nabokov's autobiography being *Conclusive Evidence*], of freedom from the fat of irrelevent fact, and that in itself could be disturbing to a subject such as mine, who has been known to praise biographies only for their documentation. But of these things not a word was said that warm and dusky winter afternoon" (5f). Nabokov is a more or less constant kibitzer throughout the book and chimes in often enough (in boldface type when his words are quoted directly) to mutter his disapprobation of what Andrew is writing at the moment: "I hasten now (too slowly, thinks Nabokov) to leave this subject" (63). Andrew introduces one of his speculations with the words, "There is no doubt in my mind . . ." and then tells us, "Nabokov denies this [speculation] emphatically, indignantly." Surely a normal mind might have entertained *some* doubt? But this is the mind of Andrew—

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independent, insouciant, and radically ineducable. It was really a stroke of genius on Field's part to invent this imbecile as a foil for his subject, though sometimes the caricature is so broad as to resist all credibility.

"Invent," to be sure, is not quite the right word, since this device, like so much else, also derives from Nabokov's own practice. One of his most cherished methods of structuring his books is exemplified in *Pale Fire*, where the great poet John Shade is researched, badgered, and spaniel'd-at-heels by the lunatic next door, who is the "author" of the book. In *The Real Life of Sebastian Knight* the eponymous hero, a gifted novelist, is researched by V., his half brother, who took a course in authorship as preparation for his job. The pattern is that of a central figure of genius whose life and works have somehow fallen into the hands of a foreground figure who, if not always insane, is always limited in some important way. Even Nabokov's 1941 book on Gogol follows this schema to a certain extent, as does his brilliant commentary on Pushkin's *Eugene Onegin*. Both are forerunners of Field's basic technique in this biography.

Andrew Field's book will be the starting point for all future students of Nabokov's life, but it will take a very saintly future student indeed to withhold imprecations against its contempt for scholarship. This is of course the work of the dreadful Andrew, who reveals everywhere a surly resentment against the academy. His ultimate act of defiance against his great friend is to omit the documentation, the one element that Nabokov is said to have appreciated in a biography. No notes, no bibliography, no index—nothing. Unattributed quotations and translations from unspecified sources swim dreamily in and out of the text. Andrew scarcely knows how to congratulate himself enough for his diligence in ferreting out obscure material "—*So you have even found those books!* my subject said to me with a soft grim sigh" (56), but the reliability of all this must rest upon his exceedingly dubious say-so. There is no documentation where it is wanted, but on a very peripheral topic—the question whether the level of testosterone in the blood might affect sexual orientation—Andrew, who is nothing if not up to date, sends us to the *New England Journal of Medicine* for November, 1971. The article in question was widely reported in the popular press, but Andrew will have us suppose that he chanced upon it in his regular scanning of the *New England Journal of Medicine*. The odor of the commoner kinds of academic fraud is seldom entirely absent from his discourse.

But fascinating as Andrew is, it is naturally the other, the real

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figure, who lends this book its enduring value. Field succeeds in making him almost physically present, not only through the device of having him intrude constantly upon the narrative as it proceeds but also in his skilful recreation of distant and surely hitherto unheard-of events. Examples are everywhere. Nabokov's beloved father was gunned down at a meeting of exiles in Berlin when he sought to protect the real target of the attack. Field vividly depicts the event, in itself well enough known, but he also places the distraught son unforgettably at the scene. He follows, sometimes in great detail, the Nabokov who criss-crossed America as an indefatigable lecturer on literary and sometimes entomological themes. Nabokov copes with sleepless nights in Pullman berths, missed connections, the lost cufflink, and an itinerary that must have been composed by an agent with no map. In a matter of days he goes from Coker College (for white women) in South Carolina up to Richmond (lecture cancelled) and down to Spelman College (for black women) in Atlanta, where his lecture on Pushkin's African ancestry is stormily approved of and where Nabokov is enchanted by students and faculty, then off *ins Blaue* to pass through Macalester College in St. Paul, where there were nine hundred in the audience, perhaps because a local paper had announced him as "a celebrated Soviet writer and a personal friend of Joseph Stalin," and sometime later through Dartmouth, where the audience for his lecture, which someone had forgot to announce, numbered eight. Nabokov once had a serious case of ptomaine poisoning from having eaten Virginia ham with spinach and coffee in a Harvard Square establishment (". . . the fateful blue plateful," writes the incorrigible Andrew). In Ithaca he was friends with an F.B.I. agent. We witness the exact words with which Roman Jakobson is alleged to have scotched Nabokov's appointment at Harvard. We attend his classes at Cornell, follow the uneasy friendship with Edmund Wilson through its spectacular conclusion, move with the almost propertyless Nabokovs from one rented house to another, and learn, in some detail, of his much-admired work on butterfly genitalia. All this we do while being agreeably aware of Nabokov's constant surveillance of the narrative from the vantage point of his apartment in the Montreux Palace Hotel. It is highly entertaining and satisfying.

CLARENCE BROWN

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A PARABLE OF THE PRESENT

THE YOUNG HEGEL. By George Lukács. MIT Press. $9.95.

In 1921, in *History and Class Consciousness,* Lukács confidently heralded a proletarian revolution which would liberate mankind from capitalism, oppression and alienation. Two decades after the Russian Revolution, Stalin's terror and his ruthless efforts to make Russia catch up with the capitalist achievements of the West had raised serious questions about the past and future course of the revolution, even among the most committed Communists.

Thematically, Lukács' response to these developments belongs with Koestler's *The Yogi and the Commissar* and Merleau-Ponty's *Humanism or Terror. The Young Hegel,* first published in 1948, is a reevaluation of the Revolution and of Lukács' earlier reaction to it, as well as a reexamination of the role of morality and political expediency in history. But unlike Koestler and Merleau-Ponty, Lukács had been writing in the Soviet Union; and 1936, the year he began *The Young Hegel,* was the year Stalin's purge of Party members developed into Zinoviev's infamous show trial. It was hardly the moment to draw attention to oneself by writing about the regime openly. Lukács had to proceed by indirection and to expect readers of Hegel to realize that "the exoteric philosophy was merely an act of conformity with the political realities of the day."

On the face of it, *The Young Hegel* is a biography of Hegel's intellectual development between 1798 and 1807. These were the years when Hegel made the crucial transition from subjective to objective idealism, gradually breaking away from the tutelage of Kant, Fichte and Schelling to write his first major work, *The Phenomenology of Mind.* They were also important years for the French Revolution: they saw the overthrow of Robespierre and the Jacobins by the conservative reaction of Thermidor, the Napoleonic dictatorship and the Restoration.

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Lukács was interested in the way these historical and political events in France affected the development of German philosophy and in the impact of each phase of the French Revolution on Hegel's thought. He showed how Hegel's "tragic conflicts" with the realities of the French Revolution repeatedly forced him to revise his ideas. The drama here is the drama of a man learning that he cannot create reality in the image of his subjective ideal and slowly coming to know the objective world which, needless to say, is nothing like his ideal.

Historical subjects are not chosen at random, even when their interest is purely academic. When the usual channels of political expression are closed—as they were for Elizabethan dramatists and for what Lukács calls the literature of democratic humanist protest in the 30s—writers look to history for parallels to the present and veil topical issues in historical fable. As Lukács pointed out in 1937: "the direct and conceptual relation with the present which prevails today reveals an immanent tendency to turn the past into a *parable of the present*, to wrest directly from history a *fabula docet* . . ." (Lukács' italics).

The parallel between the French Revolution and the Russian Revolution was already a commonplace of the left-wing opposition within the Russian Communist Party. It had been used against Lenin's economic policy in the 20s, and it was used by Trotsky and his supporters against Stalin in the 30s. The point of the comparison was that the socialist revolution had been betrayed. Like the French Revolution, the Russian Revolution had merely overthrown feudalism to establish State capitalism, in a process which drowned its bright hopes of liberty and fraternity in blood.

Lukács used Hegel's changing philosophical reactions to the French Revolution as a parable for the changes in his own reactions to the Russian Revolution. Behind the exoteric study of Hegel, Lukács reconsidered his own view of history and the role of morality within it.

In *History and Class Consciousness*, man's fragmentation and reification in an alien and dehumanized world were seen as evils of capitalist society which the proletariat would overcome. When Lukács still believed that the proletarian revolution was "on the agenda of world history," he thought that revolutionary action would reconcile man to his world, and reality to morality. But by *The Young Hegel*, Lukács had realized that the alien and dehumanized character of the world—which Hegel calls "positivity" and associates with the Christian period—was not so easily overcome. And he criticized Hegel's "revolutionary hopes for a radical regeneration of society and state, a regeneration that will result in the abolition of their positive qualities"

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as a Jacobin illusion Hegel shared with plebeian revolutionary politicians like Robespierre.

In *The Young Hegel,* Lukács argued that the Jacobin revolutionary idea of abolishing the "positivity" of extant society by creating a democracy based on the free self-activity of individuals liberated from the state had been an illusion because it ignored economic realities. In the guise of a discussion about Robespierre, Lukács reevaluated Lenin's program for the new society in *The State and Revolution,* a work instrumental in his own conversion to Marxism. Like Lenin's idea of reviving the Paris Commune, Robespierre's idea of reviving the Greek *polis* assumed that democracy depends on equality of wealth; like Lenin, Robespierre could achieve a partial scaling-down of inequalities only during the period when the feudal estates were first broken down into peasant smallholdings; and like Lenin, his revolutionary measures only unleashed the forces of capitalism which triumphed in Thermidor.

With Thermidor, capitalism became an "inexorable fate" which could neither be fought nor evaded; and for superannuated Jacobins, the problem was how to come to terms with it. Since there was no longer any prospect of a revolutionary reconciliation of reality and morality, Hegel found that he had to deal with the conflict between capitalism and his moral postulates in the present and within the bounds of society as it was. Lukács was facing the same problem. As Hegel sought "a mode of activity within bourgeois society that would satisfy his humanist ideals," so Lukács sought a mode of activity within Soviet capitalism that would satisfy his. In his essays on Lessing, Goethe and Schiller and in his aesthetic studies between 1936 and 1938, Lukács explored attempts to reconcile love with power, and social utopias with capitalist realities.

Although humanism remains the moral touchstone of Lukács' mature writings, he had no idea of how to transform his humanist critical insights into political action. In the Stalinist or Napoleonic period, the only way to come to terms with an apparently inexorable fate was to accept it, and to try to view it philosophically in the context of "the whole historical development of humanity."

For Lukács, as for Hegel, the contradiction between present evils and humanist postulates could be relativized within the whole historical development of humanity by arguing that "the progress of man is inevitably entwined with the worst impulses of human nature." If progress inevitably involves loss and individual tragedies, if the "cunning of reason" uses self-interest, greed and the lust for power to propel

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humanity to an "objectively" higher stage of development, the evil of the moment can be perceived as universal good. To accept the Jacobin Terror, the Napoleonic dictatorship, the sacrifice of individuals and the debasement of man, one has only to perceive them as historical necessities. Was not the Jacobin tyranny necessary to protect society from attempts to restore feudalism? Did it not establish the modern state? Was not the Napoleonic dictatorship necessary to protect the state from the backwardness of the masses?

One of the few reservations one might have about Mr. Livingstone's translation is that his decision to translate *Entaüsserung* by "externalization," instead of by the accepted "alienation," might obscure a point crucial to the continuity of Lukács' argument. To make the transition from subjective to objective idealism, the individual had to realize that the "positive," alien world was the product of past human activity and that this alienated reality was the foundation of his existence as an individual and the only possible field for his activity. This enabled consciousness to try and overcome its conflict with the "already established, alien world" by seeking to explain it in the context of the "whole historical development of humanity." If the individual had found that he could "construct his own reality on his own, by virtue of his own activity," or if humanity had *merely* externalized itself, there would have been no problem and no tragic conflict.

Moreover, it is precisely because the conflict remains unresolved, because reality remains alien, that Lukács had to reassert Marxism at the end of *The Young Hegel.* While consciousness consoled itself in its own constructions, while it waited on history, whose providential progress "good of evil shall produce/And evil turn to good," exploitation, alienation and oppression remained present realities. If reality had been alienated by human activity, it could be changed by human activity. Two decades after the Russian Revolution, man's real alienation in the real world could only be overcome by changing reality.

As *History and Class Consciousness* marks Lukács' conversion to Marxism, so *The Young Hegel* marks his painful transition to the more sober reaffirmation of Marxism in *Existentialisme ou Marxisme.* Mr. Livingstone's extremely readable translation of *The Young Hegel* has given the English-speaking world not only the document of an era, but also a human document—the record of a *crise de conscience.*

EVE TAVOR

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REASSESSING SLAVERY

Circumstances delayed the publication of this review, but we feel that the books under consideration and the quality of the review itself merit its publication even at this late date.

SLAVES WITHOUT MASTERS: THE FREE NEGRO IN THE ANTEBELLUM SOUTH. By Ira Berlin. Pantheon Books. $15.00.

THE PROBLEM OF SLAVERY IN THE AGE OF REVOLUTION 1770–1823. By David Brion Davis. Cornell University Press. $17.50.

TIME ON THE CROSS: THE ECONOMICS OF AMERICAN NEGRO SLAVERY. By Robert William Fogel and Stanley L. Engerman. Little, Brown, and Company, 2 vols. $8.95, $12.50.

ROLL, JORDAN, ROLL: THE WORLD THE SLAVES MADE. By Eugene D. Genovese. Pantheon Books. $17.50.

In the past twenty years a controversy about the nature of history has raged with an intensity unequalled since the fundamental conflicts about historical method around the turn of this century. This turmoil has been fed by the convergence of two different innovative impulses. One of these impulses has come out of the political and social radicalization associated transitorily with the New Left and more fundamentally with the concern for the rights of underprivileged groups. The radicals have urged the revision of historical standards toward what in the past is relevant to the reform rather than to the benign explanation of the present. The other impulse, coming out of an autonomous academic radicalism, has resulted in the massive importation of qualitative concepts and quantitative techniques from the behavioral sciences into history, and has expanded the historical arena to include kinds of people and activities formerly considered essentially unhistorical. The academic radicals attacked at the point of the traditional ambiguity between the definitions of history as the story of change in the past and as the depiction of the integral human past, storied or not, changeful or not. They found an equally vulnerable point of attack in the criterion of "representative" selection in traditional history (with its frequent assumption that a society was automatically represented by its accessible documents). The enlargement of

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history called for by both kinds of radicals accommodated in principle both old and new standards, but often enough there was a clash between the two sets of standards for mastery over the intersections or even over the entirety of an extended and homogenized historical domain.

Obviously, the two kinds of radicalism—sociopolitical and academic—have converged in their opposition to the elitism and fortuitousness of representative criteria in traditional history, and in their common espousal of the inarticulate majority and its characteristic activities as the authentic subjects of a humanized history. However, the two kinds of radicalism have also diverged crucially, for the methods of academic radicalism have tended to emphasize persistent, inertial relationships, while the standards of sociopolitical radicalism have stressed hitherto unsuspected conditions and agencies of revolution.

The historical reexamination of slavery that has produced a continuous flow of books and articles extending the earlier work of the fine black scholars, whose ethnic interest was obviously paramount, seems to begin with Kenneth Stampp's *Peculiar Institution* of 1956, a scant two years after the Supreme Court decision in *Brown vs. Board of Education* made the racial problem and its antecedents the most prominent public issue in contemporary American life. That issue provided not only incentive but also guiding concepts for the historical reconstruction. The coincidental vogue of grass-roots history dignified materials testifying to the attitudes of ordinary slaveholders and even of slaves—materials not formerly sought out because they were thought inappropriate to serious history. Thus the kind of social history that had been dominated by the selective paternalistic sympathies of Ulrich Phillips has now been crucially supplemented by the more egalitarian inquiry into the conditions and attitudes of less authoritative people, white and black alike. There can be little doubt that the confluence of a democratic politics and an historiographical populism has led to the current plethora of both special studies manifesting black slavery's infinite variety and general syntheses re-evaluating fundamental questions in the light of this new, internalized perspective.

Of the four books under review here, Ira Berlin's *Slaves without Masters* typifies the best in the genre of special studies; the other three are landmarks in the synoptic reassessment of black slavery and of the antislavery movements. Each of the books in this genre is a sequel to prior studies by the same authors in which they first presented, in more schematic form, the analytical structures they now apply to the whole

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range of the current historical evidence on black slavery. Genovese published two preparatory volumes of experimental and interpretive essays, *The Political Economy of Slavery* in 1965 and *The World the Slaveholders Made* in 1969. Davis published in 1964 what he frankly labelled an "introductory volume"—*The Problem of Slavery in Western Culture*—to the actual history of antislavery movements that we now have before us. And Robert Fogel first applied mathematical models and the quantification of data to history in the collection of essays on the more limited and congenial subject of *Railroads and American Economic Growth* (1964).

By the criterion of method rather than of scope, the distinction between genres runs a bit differently, since Berlin, Davis, and Genovese master the new materials with traditional historical concepts and procedures, while the work of Fogel and Engerman has unleashed an intraprofessional storm because of the innovative, "cliometric" concepts and procedures they have adopted as appropriate to the new material and because of some variant conclusions to which these concepts and procedures have led. But, at least to an outsider, the common insights into the historical nature of black slavery that come out of the contemporary approaches to it overshadow the differences that bulk so large to the participants in the discussion.

What there is of consensus in the present perspective on the history of black slavery stems from the institution's position precisely at the intersection of the concerns characteristic of the old and the new history. Slavery was both a system of control and a definition of social status. Consequently, the unifying pressures of political framework and intellectual coherence remain as relevant to it as the newer acknowledgement of diversity in what used to be deprecated as mass-man. Such an intermediate position does make slavery inevitably an arena of confrontation for old and new historians, in contrast to the uneasy toleration sometimes permitted by purer fields, such as unit ideas and demography. But at the same time this propensity for using the traditional bonds of political and intellectual authority to organize the multiformity of social life enforces a common approach that limits the scope of confrontation.

The reiterated demonstration of the complexity and heterogeneity of the subject is an obvious mark of the new consensus in the history of black slavery; but the growth of such awareness with the passage of time characterizes the historiography of any subject. This emphasis on complexity and heterogeneity, moreover, must be the expected consequence of recent historians' preferred approach to black slavery through the differential identification and study from the inside out

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and from the bottom up of the distinct groupings of American society in their relationship to this institution—that is, of black rural slaves, white and black rural slaveholders, free blacks in town and country, white nonslaveholders in the country, whites anywhere, urban blacks, factory blacks, and abolitionists secular and confessional, to give only a sample listing. What is remarkable about the avowals of complexity in this historiographical case is the pervasive tendency to formulate it in terms of "contradictions," "ambiguities," and "inconsistencies," for these concepts and formulations suggest a continuing unitary and even logical point of reference, revealing the persistence of principled issues through all the scholarly qualifications and cautions against oversimplification of the issues.

The schema is most patent in Genovese's *Roll, Jordan, Roll,* for his sophisticated Marxist categories, modulated by a general infusion of Hegel (the Hegel of lordship-bondage fame), achieve a linkage of opposites in a dynamic dialectical process that can accommodate the profusion of vital—and often discrepant—social evidence he accumulates. Under the rubric of the inherent contradiction in the concept of a human slavery, Genovese develops polar but continuously interactive categories: on the one side a slaveholding class that expressed its combined exploitation of and dependence upon its slaves in a flexible spectrum of paternalistic domination; on the other, a black slave class that expressed both subordination and self-assertion in an autonomous Afro-American culture with insistent claims of indefeasible rights within the conditions of nonresistance. Because Genovese frequently separates abstract expositions of his organizing concepts from the rapid-fire sequence of concrete episodes, quotations, and vignettes that presumably illustrate them, the hold of the categories on the material sometimes seems tenuous. Occasionally, indeed, the dialectical play of his concepts seems so lively and inclusive as to preclude the possibility of any position, however apparently dissonant, falling outside them. Issues such as that of the cruelty, indulgence, responsibility, or guiltiness of the masters, of the compliance or resistance of the slaves, and of the African or mimetic shares in the slave culture tend to get resolved by comprehensiveness rather than decision, and readers who have been brought up on the older either-or may find it hard to consider such settlements as resolutions at all. But by and large the schema does work: Genovese manages to account for a greater range of evidence and, by converting alternatives into proportions, to strike a more satisfying balance of intelligibility and factuality than anyone heretofore.

What confers generality upon this use of traditional concepts—

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intellectual, political, and moral—to control the heterogeneous mass of material and the discordant tendencies for which contemporary scholarship strives to account is its adoption by non-Marxist scholars as different from Genovese and indeed from each other as David Brion Davis and Ira Berlin. In its conscientious depiction of the antislavery movements in America and Britain, Davis's *The Problem of Slavery in the Age of Revolution* scrupulously uncovers the blend of idealism and self-interest in the antislavery movement and the qualifications and limitations along the tortuous path of its development. In his account the thrust of each antislavery movement, with the solitary exception of the Quakers, is blurred when it is not actually reversed, and yet the presentation hangs together. It does so, moreover, by virtue of Davis's preference for the problematic side of the ideological component in history and his use of it to organize the incongruent behavior of his historical agents. Thus the duplicitous attitude of American revolutionaries toward slavery gets explained under the general heading of "inconsistency" in the revolutionary ideology. Again, the tergiversations of British antislavery are grounded in the odd coupling of evangelicalism and utilitarianism as the dominant cultural motif of the early nineteenth century. Analogously, in Ira Berlin's *Slaves without Masters*, despite the bifurcation of the free blacks' culture into the distinct patterns of the Upper and the Lower South, the diversity of their economic status, and the variety of their relations with both whites and slave blacks, the pervasive controls of white supremacy are shown to have exercised a unifying influence, conditioning the treatment of free blacks in accord with the requirements of the slave system and homogenizing the essential features of their lives—however different those controls were in different regional circumstances.

The academic furor that has greeted Fogel and Engerman's *Time on the Cross* (partially recounted, of course from the authors' point of view, in the second volume) must be attributed in good measure to these economic historians' deliberate methodological departure from this established pattern in the contemporary historiography of slavery. For years Robert Fogel has been waging an energetic campaign on behalf of quantitative methods and a conformable logic of explanation in history, and in *Time on the Cross* Engerman and he have moved from the investment of this approach in new historical areas to a terrain that has brought them into direct conflict with the traditional approaches. Certainly the excessive effort and attention devoted in a relatively brief text to polemics against traditional interpreters, recent

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as well as remote, suggests that the deviations in their views on slavery derive from their methods, rather than the other way around. This review is not the occasion and your reviewer is not the man to enter into the ongoing discussion of Fogel and Engerman's questionable application of their own method in *Time on the Cross* (for the most extended of the attacks on this application the reader is referred to Herbert G. Gutman's *Slavery and the Numbers Game*), but what must be noted here is the consequence of their method for the general historiography of slavery.

Fogel and Engerman have deprecated the political and intellectual categories that impose the unity of an authoritarian and exploitative system upon the historical materials of slavery, and they have directed their attack, in the name of empirical science, against the ill-supported generalizations of traditional history. But this attack has had the paradoxical effect of removing precisely those categories that now rationalize the heterogeneity of slave conditions and of replacing them with homogenizing inductions that exalt averages and ignore diversity. The thesis emphatically advanced by Fogel and Engerman that black slavery was an economically viable institution has been widely accepted and is not the real issue between them and their academic peers. What is in contention is Fogel and Engerman's identification of this thesis with a consistent capitalism and with the efficiency, prudent benevolence, favorable living conditions, and familial stability normally associated with such capitalism, as against the standard articulation of slavery's dominant concepts to account for an ill-assorted mix of capitalism and precapitalism, of domination, obligation, and concession.

This is to say that Fogel and Engerman, like other contemporary historians, rely on general concepts to make sense of their material, but they part company with their colleagues in their emphasis on simplicity rather than tensility in these concepts. *Time on the Cross* posits a disjunction between the authencitity of a black culture and the traditional idea of slavery as crushing and inhumane, and ultimately the book justifies all its particular inferences under the heading of black dignity, aligning them against the "racist" implications of radical antislavery. But for Genovese, Davis, Berlin, and a host of other contemporary writers, the categories of cultural dignity, racial discrimination, and the institution of slavery, however opposed in principle, were nonetheless joined, both attitudinally and practically, in the past; for these historians it is precisely in the constant fact but

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changing form of the relationships among these three principles that the history of slavery and its continuity with the subsequent fate of black Americans must be sought.

The history of slavery remains a thriving scholarly business, as the recent publication of G. Duncan Rice's *The Rise and Fall of Black Slavery* (1975) attests. Certainly the debate that rages around *Time on the Cross* will do the business little harm, since it rescues the field from the constriction entailed by the praise of Genovese's and Davis's works as "definitive." If the historiography of other subjects serves as any precedent, certain features in the future literature on slavery may be anticipated. The extreme positions of Fogel and Engerman will be taken as overstatements of the evidence for the economic and social viability of slavery that must be taken into account in the continuing study of the subject and that supplies the historiographical dimension of current political distraction from civil rights. As usual, new historiography and new political concerns will jointly modulate the traditional institutional, intellectual, and moral categories that remain the historian's only way to organize an increasingly multifarious past.

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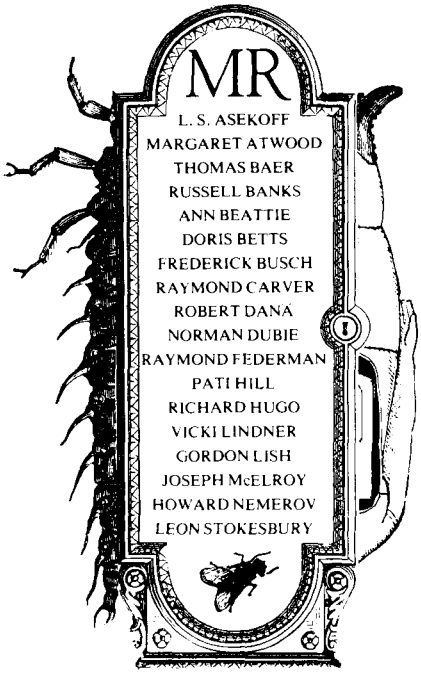

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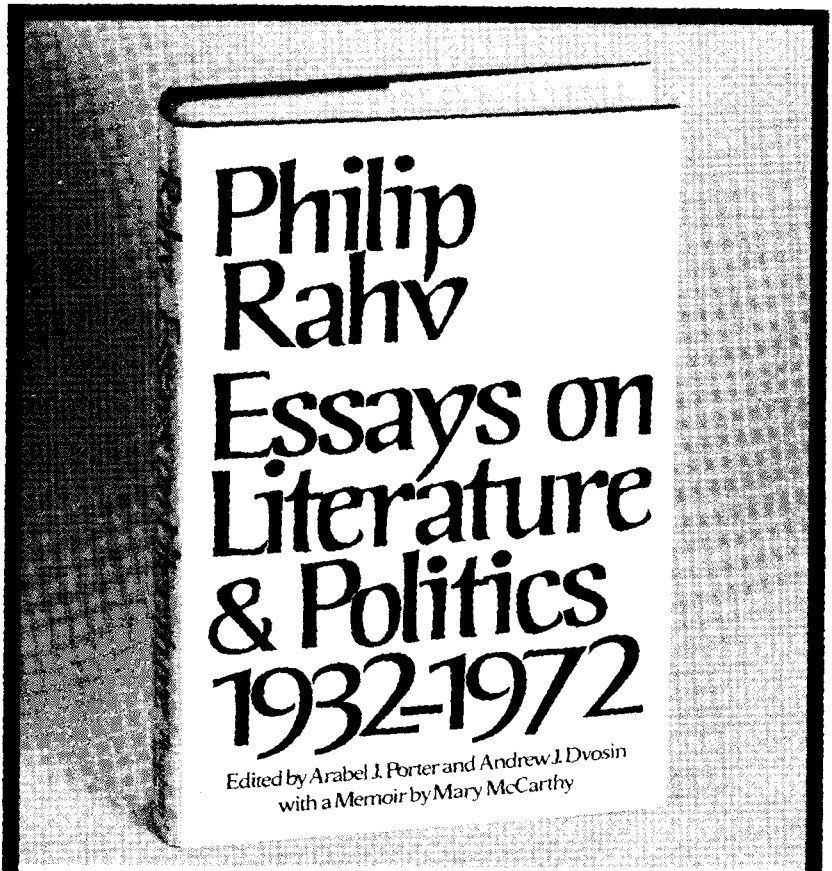

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